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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Where should the
governor deliver his
State of the
Commonwealth
Address this year?

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INSIDE



Laurean Caught

A Marine wanted in the brutal slaying of a pregnant colleague who had accused him of rape was arrested in Mexico.

NATION...Page 10



Empty Lake

Melting ice in southern Chile caused a glacial lake to swell and then empty suddenly, sending a "tsunami" rolling through a river.

WORLD...Page 11



Papal Visit

On Tuesday, Pope Benedict XVI (the 16th) begins a six-day visit to Washington and New York.

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Free refreshments in today's walkathon. PAGE 5

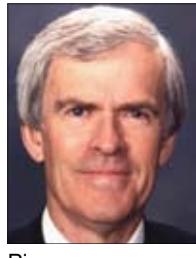
US Senate OKs federalization bill

Bill goes back to U.S. House for concurrence

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

The U.S. Senate yesterday passed an omnibus bill that contains provisions to federalize the Commonwealth's immigration control.

The bill, approved 91-4, includes technical amendments to the CNMI provisions previously passed by the House



Bingaman



Christensen

of Representatives. Minor changes were also made to the other House-approved measures included in the package.

The omnibus bill now heads to the U.S.

See US on Page 4

'Bill's passage a big victory'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Federalization proponents said yesterday that the U.S. Senate's passage of federalization bill is a big victory for guest workers and human rights advocates.

Dekada counsel Stephen Woodruff said they are pleased that the U.S. Senate has finally passed the legislation that includes the extension of the fed-

RELATED NEWS

- Consul general pleased with S.2739 passage. PAGE 12
- Federalization forum bids to dispel rumors. PAGE 12

eral immigration law to the CNMI.

"Of course that's just one step but it's an important step. We're one step closer

See BILL'S on Page 4



REDEDICATION CEREMONY

Olympio T. Borja's family members tour the library during the rededication ceremony at the Northern Marianas College Friday morning. Inset shows acting Gov. Timothy Villagomez, Northern Marianas College president Dr. Carmen Fernandez, NMC Board of regent member Agnes McPhee, and Frances L.G. Borja, daughter of the late Olympio T. Borja cutting the ribbon during the rededication ceremony. See Page 2 for story.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



\$1.592M for former MGM workers remain unclaimed

EX-MGM workers must claim wages by Oct. 1

SAN FRANCISCO—Former garment workers at Marianas Garment Manufacturing on Saipan have failed to claim \$1,592,092 in back wages owed them following an agreement with the

U.S. Department of Labor.

The back wages, which range from \$70 to \$3,776 apiece, are owed to 763 workers who were employed by the

See \$1.592M on Page 4

States may free inmates to save millions

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (AP)—

Lawmakers from California to Kentucky are trying to save money with a drastic and potentially dangerous budget-cutting proposal: releasing tens of thousands of convicts from prison, including drug addicts, thieves and even violent criminals.

Officials acknowledge that the idea



Heaton

carries risks, but they say they have no choice because of huge budget gaps brought on by the slumping economy.

"If we don't find a way to better manage the population at the state prison, we will be forced to spend money to expand the state's prison system—money we don't have,"

See STATES on Page 4

Local

Three separate earthquakes jolt NMI

Three earthquakes, all with magnitudes of 5, jolted the CNMI yesterday morning and afternoon.

The CNMI Emergency Management Office was quick to assure, though, that based

on available data, it does not expect any destructive Pacific-wide tsunami.

"There is no tsunami threat to the Marianas," according to the EMO's report.

EMO also did not receive

report about injuries and damage to property as a result of the temblors.

The first earthquake occurred at 11:28am, about 6.2 miles deep and located at latitude 15.978 degrees north 145.024 degrees east,

Sapan region.

EMO said this is about 50 miles west-southwest of Anatahan, 70 miles northwest of Saipan, 75 miles north west of Tinian and 125 miles north of Rota.

The second quake was about 6.2 miles deep and was located at latitude 16.179 degrees north

144.837 degrees east in the Anatahan region.

This is about 55 miles west-southwest of Anatahan, 90 miles northwest of Saipan, 95 miles northwest of Tinian and 140 miles north of Rota.

The last tremor happened at 1:16pm, with a depth of 21.7

miles and located at latitude 16.058 degrees north 144.855 degrees east, Anatahan region.

EMO said this is about 60 miles west-southwest of Anatahan, 80 miles northwest of Saipan, 85 miles northwest of Tinian, and 135 miles north of Rota. (*Ferdie de la Torre*)



KAGMAN FIESTA TOMORROW

The Santa Soledad Fiesta Committee is inviting the public to attend the annual fiesta of the Nuestra Senora Dela Soledad Parish in Kagman tomorrow, April 13, 2008. Service will begin at 9am followed by a motorcade through the village of Kagman and the fiesta celebration itself. Bring your family and friends and join the celebration and participate in the motorcade on Sunday. The motorcade route: Leaving the church on Cha Cha Rd. to Hasngot Dr. to Mangga St. to Payaya Dr. to Lalanghita Rd. to Puteng Dr. to Alageta Rd. to Banalu St. to Nonnak Ave. to Gaogao Dr. to Kagman Rd. and back to the church. Please come out to pay your respects to our village patron saint when we pass near your home. There are a lot of prizes to be given away. Picture shows the Santa Soledad Fiesta Committee members (some members not present) posing with Father Manny R. Corcueria and fiesta committee chair Ambrose M. Bennett.

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN

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REPORTERS

The Northern Marianas College has joined the nationwide celebration of April 2008 as community college month, made official yesterday via an endorsement by Lt. Gov. Timothy Villagomez in a proclamation signing ceremony.

As part of this event and in commemoration of NMC's 27th year as an institution, the college's Olympio T. Borja Memorial Library was rededicated yesterday.

The library was originally dedicated to the late Senator Borja on Dec. 4, 1987, at an event that included then Lt. Gov. Pedro A. Tenorio and then college president Agnes

McPhetres.

The library contains approximately 12,000 volumes of books and other materials. It serves as NMC's main library center and contains nearly 40,000 items, including books, periodicals, and AV materials. It is complemented by the Pacific Collection, the CNMI Archives, and the Curriculum Resource Center, which is an education library held in partnership with the School of Education.

According to NMC president Dr. Carmen Fernandez, "The library has played an integral part in the educational and professional growth of NMC students and others in the community."

She said the college is planning to expand that role by "aggressively seeking funding sources that will pay for expanded state-of-the-art equipment and other materials that will enhance the CNMI community's library experience."

NMC also celebrated its 27th annual Charter Day yesterday

with a grand party held at its Finasisu campus that lasted well into the night.

The event showcased talents and performances of Saipan Grand Hotel's Zynergy Band, local entertainer Maggie Naputi, and reggae band Burning Bush.

The event also featured Penina Ole Vasa, Da Metgot, Southern High Manta Ray, Final Extreme, Inatus, and the English Department Dance Club, among others.

NMC's recruitment committee also hosted a booth for students interested in applying for admission for Fall 2008.

From 1982 to 2007, NMC awarded more than 3,500 diplomas, certificates and degrees. This translates to 675 high school diplomas; 723 certificates; 1,683 Associate of Arts, and 158 baccalaureates.

Villagomez is urging everyone to support the college and to "appreciate the value of having a postsecondary institution" on the islands.

'Prepare now for Marines' \$15B relocation to Guam'

A lawmaker says preparations must begin soon so the CNMI can gain the full benefits from the transfer of 8,000 Marines from Okinawa to Guam.

Rep. Joseph C. Reyes, in a letter to Speaker Arnold I. Palacios, listed his ideas on how the Commonwealth can begin to prepare for the Guam military buildup.

Reyes said the massive construction expected to take place before the Marines' relocation presents the CNMI an opportunity to use the untapped resources of pozzolan on Pagan.

Pozzolan can be used as an additive to produce blended cement.

"We should expedite the mining of pozzolan to satisfy the needs of the builders and bring the much needed revenues into the CNMI coffers.. We are looking at investments of over 15 billion dollars and chances are, more than half of this is for concrete," he said.

Reyes also said the government should consider reviving the Tinian wastewater disposal project. Tinian is being eyed for military training purposes. By completing the sewer proj-

ect, Reyes said, the government can show its willingness to host the military.

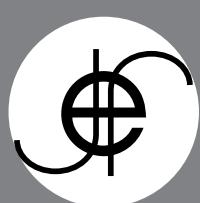
"The more we show the military our willingness to work with them, the more they will be willing to make commitments to work with us," he said.

With effective marketing, the lawmaker said, Saipan's visitor industry can benefit from the increased military presence on Guam.

While Tinian can host the troops, Saipan can entertain their dependents, Reyes said. He urged the Marianas Visitors Authority to put together vacation plans for the military and their families.

Further, Saipan can serve as a staging area for military units training on Tinian, according to Reyes.

"These are only a few suggestions on how the CNMI can take advantage of the \$15 billion projected to move the Marianas to Guam," Reyes said. "The point is we should start planning now so as not to miss out on the economic windfall that is already in our neighborhood." (*Agnes E. Donato*)



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High Court affirms DUI conviction

The Commonwealth Supreme Court, in a unanimous decision, affirmed Jetro U. Mettao's conviction for driving under the influence of alcohol.

In October 2004, a police officer noticed Mettao driving erratically at a high rate of speed along Middle Road. After stopping Mettao and ordering him out of his vehicle, the officer noticed that Mettao reacted slowly to his instructions, had bloodshot eyes, a flushed face, and smelled strongly of alcohol. Mettao also told the officer that he drank four beers shortly before driving. After his arrest, Mettao failed a breathalyzer test and two field sobriety tests. Thereafter, the trial court convicted Mettao of driving under the influence of alcohol.

On appeal, Mettao asked the Supreme Court to overturn his conviction on several grounds. First, Mettao claimed the trial court should have conducted a pre-trial hearing to determine whether his alcohol-related statements to the officer were voluntary. The Supreme Court rejected Mettao's argument, stating it was "unnecessary for a trial judge in a non-jury trial to conduct a separate hearing on voluntariness." The Supreme Court further stated that the trial court considered the voluntariness of Mettao's alcohol-related statements during the trial itself, and therefore did not err in refusing to

conduct a separate pre-trial hearing to address the issue.

Second, Mettao argued that the trial court erred in admitting his alcohol-related statements into evidence because the police officer never asked him if he understood that he had the right to remain silent. The Supreme Court, however, found that Mettao failed to preserve this issue for appellate review because he never objected to the admissibility of his alcohol-related statements at trial. The Supreme Court also stated that the trial court never admitted Mettao's alcohol-related statements into evidence. Rather, the Supreme Court stated that the trial court "explicitly excluded Mettao's statements (in reaching its decision)."

Third, Mettao argued that the trial court erred in considering the results of his breathalyzer and field sobriety tests based on the "fruit of the poisonous tree" doctrine. This doctrine, in essence, precludes the admission of evidence that is procured through an involuntary or illegal confession. Mettao claimed that the police obtained his alcohol-related statements illegally because the police failed to ask him whether he understood if he had the right to remain silent. According to Mettao, this should have precluded the trial court's admission of the results of his breathalyzer and field sobriety tests. The Supreme Court, however, found that "even without

Mettao's alcohol-related statements, the officer would have asked Mettao take the breathalyzer and field sobriety tests." The Supreme Court noted that after the officer pulled Mettao over for driving erratically, he noticed that Mettao had blood shot eyes, a flushed face, and smelled of alcohol. The Supreme Court further noted that Mettao reacted slowly to the officer's instructions. Thus, the Supreme Court stated that "we doubt that any competent police officer...would have failed to request a breathalyzer and field sobriety test based on Mettao's driving and appearance."

Finally, Mettao argued that the trial court erred in considering the results of his breathalyzer test because the prosecution didn't provide him with information about the test before trial. The Supreme Court, however, found that Mettao did not preserve this issue for appellate review because he failed to object to the admissibility of his breathalyzer test at trial. Regardless, the Supreme Court concluded that there was "ample evidence to support Mettao's conviction" even without the breathalyzer test.

The Supreme Court opinion was penned by Justice Alejandro C. Castro, who was joined by Justice John A. Manglona, and Guam Supreme Court Chief Justice Robert J. Torres, Jr., who heard the appeal as a justice pro tem. (PR)

CUC sets water outage for repairs

There will be no water in parts of Kannat Tabla, Finasisu, As Terlaje, Chalan Kiya and Chalan Laulau today due to the scheduled rehabilitation of the Isley Booster 1 pump station.

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. through its contractor, AIC Marianas, is scheduled to make necessary upgrades to the existing pumping station to allow for better water flow into the new Kannat Tabla reservoir and bring it into compliance with Environmental Protection Agency regulations.

The EPA-funded rehabilitation of the Isley Booster 1 is part of the Kannat Tabla reservoir and waterline project and its goal to pressurize the water system, improve water quantity and quality.

The schedule upgrade works will begin today, April 12, from 8am to 5pm.

Water services to the residents of Kannat

Tabla, Finasisu, As Terlaje, Chalan Kiya, and Chalan Laulau areas will be affected during this period. Normal water hours will resume on Sunday.

The CUC offers the following tentative water schedule for the following areas:

Areas Affected	Tentative Water Hours
Kannat Tabla	4am to 7:30am
Finasisu	5am to 7:30am
As Terlaje, NMC area	5am to 7:30am
Chalan Kiya	No water
Chalan Laulau	5pm to 9pm

Residents are encouraged to practice strict water conservation and to teach children and household workers to save water especially during the period. Rainwater catchment systems/water tanks should be cleaned and float valves installed or replaced to ensure that water does not overflow from any tanks.

Tuesday premiere for new history video

The NMI Council for the Humanities invites the public to attend the premier screening of *Sunburst in the South Seas* at the Visitors Center Theater, American Memorial Park, Tuesday, April 15, at 6:30pm.

The 60-minute video provides a fascinating overview of the Japanese administration of Micronesia from 1914-1941 with a particular focus on the Northern Mariana Islands.

Sunburst in the South Seas, the third video in a planned six-part History of Micronesia series, was produced by historian Francis X. Hezel, S.J. It

was supported, in part, by a Council grant.

The video utilizes rare Japanese film footage shot in Micronesia during the first three decades of the twentieth century and interviews with indigenous residents who experienced Japanese colonial rule first hand.

Fr. Hezel will provide an introductory overview of the project and then answer questions at the conclusion of the screening.

The screening is open to the public and free of charge. Interested individuals are invited to contact Council staff at telephone 235-4785 for additional details. (PR)

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Department of Public Health
Women, Infants and Children Program
Navy Hill Bldg N-25



PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

On August 8, 2007 the Department of Public Health officially opened the Women, Infants and Children Program, better known as "WIC."

The WIC Program is 100% federally funded, and provides nutritious foods, nutrition education, and health care referrals for pregnant and new mothers, infants and children below the age of five (5).

The WIC Program's goals are to reduce nutrition related health problems, promote breastfeeding, prevent anemia, and help lower medical costs for low-income families in the CNMI.

WIC foods include iron-fortified infant formula and infant cereal, iron-fortified adult cereal, vitamin C-rich fruit or vegetable juice, eggs, milk, cheese, peanut butter, dried beans/peas, tuna fish and carrots. Special therapeutic infant formulas and medical foods may be provided when prescribed by a physician for a specified medical condition.

The Program would like to thank the community for its patience during the initial phase of operation, and would like to assure the residents of Rota and Tinian that plans are underway to bring services to these respective islands. More information will be provided when the proposed opening dates are confirmed.

Eligible participants must meet income guidelines, CNMI residency requirements, and be determined to be "nutritionally at risk" by a health professional.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, please call 236-8750/58 or visit the WIC Clinic in the CHC Dialysis Center, north entrance.

OIA awards NMC \$375,000

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
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REPORTER

Lt. Gov. Tim Villagomez has inked his signature on a \$375,000 grant award approved by the Office of Insular Affairs for the Northern Marianas College to help it come into full compliance for its October 2008 report to the Western Association of Schools & Colleges.

STATES

From Page 1

said Jeff Neal, a spokesman for Rhode Island Gov. Don Carcieri.

At least eight states are considering freeing inmates or sending some convicts to rehabilitation programs instead of prison, according to an Associated Press analysis of legislative proposals. If adopted, the early release programs could save an estimated \$450 million in California and Kentucky alone.

A Rhode Island proposal would allow inmates to deduct up to 12 days from their sentence for every month they follow rules and work in prison. Even some violent offenders would be eligible but not

"This is a little of the big pot that we need, but this serves as an assurance that we will, in fact, get all of the work done so that, by our October report, we will have proof that we will be able to get our accreditation reaffirmed," said NMC president Carmen Fernandez.

NMC needs up to \$3 million as soon as possible to address the concerns raised by WASC.

those serving life sentences.

A plan in Mississippi would offer early parole for people convicted of selling marijuana or prescription drugs. New Jersey, South Carolina and Vermont are considering funneling drug-addicted offenders into treatment, which is cheaper than prison.

The prospect of financial savings offers little comfort to Tori-Lynn Heaton, a police officer in a suburb of Providence whose ex-husband went to prison for beating her. He has already finished his prison term, but would have been eligible for early release under the current proposal.

"You're talking about victim safety. You're talking about community member safety," she said. "You can't balance the budget on the backs of

Among the WASC concerns are "inadequate and unstable administrative leadership, inadequate faculty and staff, cuts in public funding, inadequate planning and resource allocation in conformity with NMC's mission, serious deficiencies in the quality of education and services offered to students at off-campus sites as well as continuing failure to institutionalize

victims of crimes."

But prisons "are one of the most expensive parts of the criminal-justice system," said Alison Lawrence, who studies corrections policy for the National Conference of State Legislatures. "That's where they look to first to cut down some of those costs."

Rhode Island Corrections Director A.T. Wall was not sure how many prisoners could be freed early. The payoff for doing so may be relatively small: less than \$1 million for the first fiscal year, although that figure would increase over time.

In California, where lawmakers have taken steps to cut a \$16 billion budget deficit in half by summer, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger proposed saving \$400 million by releas-

ing more than 22,000 inmates who had less than 20 months remaining on their sentences. Violent and sex offenders would not be eligible.

Laying off prison guards and making it more difficult to send parole violators back to state prison would account for part of the savings.

response to our request, which demonstrates their strong support for the CNMI's only public higher education institution."

NMC was placed on show-cause in January 2008.

In January 2009, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges will decide whether or not to reaffirm the college's accreditation based on the college's October 2008 report.

Loss of accreditation may result in NMC's shutdown.

\$1.592M

From Page 1

company between April 7, 1997, and April 7, 1999, and who were not paid overtime wages for all hours worked in accordance with the federal Fair Labor Standards Act.

"We would like these back wages delivered to the workers who earned them," said George Friday Jr., regional administrator of the Labor Department's Wage and Hour Division in San Francisco. "Anyone knowing of a former worker at this business should encourage that in-

dividual to step forward before the opportunity is gone."

Friday said that many of the workers left Saipan, often returning to China, before the agreement with Marianas Garment Manufacturing was signed in September 2002. His office did not have addresses or a means to contact the former employees once they left Saipan. Any wages not claimed by Oct. 1, 2008, will be transferred to the U.S. Treasury and cannot be recovered.

Former workers who believe that they may be entitled to back wages for work performed during the period covered should contact Carminia Ramirez-

Byrne, back wage disbursement officer, via e-mail at ramirez-byrne.carminia@dol.gov, phone at 415-625-7697 or fax at 415-625-7699.

The FLSA requires that covered employees receive overtime at one and one-half times their regular rates of pay for hours worked beyond 40 per week. Employers must also maintain accurate time and payroll records.

Information about the FLSA is available on the Wage and Hour Division's home page at www.wagehour.dol.gov, by calling the division toll-free at 866-487-9243 (4US-WAGE) or by calling the division's office in Saipan at 670-233-0740. (**DOL**)

US

From Page 1

House, where it has strong bipartisan support. Once the bill clears the House, it will be sent to the president for his action and will then become law.

In addition to federalizing the Northern Marianas' immigration and labor controls, the bill would give the commonwealth a congressional delegate with limited voting powers. Currently, Guam, American Samoa, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the District of Columbia have a delegate in the House.

U.S. lawmakers hailed passage of S. 2739, which includes 62 bills covering public lands, national parks, water resources and territorial issues.

Sen. Jeff Bingaman, chairman of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, said, "Today was a good day for the Senate, and for the protection of our public lands. I'm pleased that we passed this package of 62 bills, which includes new protections for outstanding wilderness, historic sites, national parks and precious water resources. When measures such as these are so broadly supported on a bipartisan basis, members on both sides of the aisle deserve to be able to have the Senate act on them expeditiously. Sen. [Pete] Domenici and I

worked very closely and cooperatively with our colleagues to ensure that they got that opportunity today."

U.S. Virgin Islands Rep. Donna Christensen, chairwoman of the House Subcommittee on Insular Affairs, said she was "very pleased" with the Senate's action. She introduced the provisions known as the CNMI Immigration, Security, and Labor Act, or ISLA, in the House. ISLA was passed by the House in December 2007.

"ISLA will provide a greater measure of security for the Marianas archipelago and opportunities for the region to grow and diversify their economies," Christensen said.

California Rep. George Miller, who for more than 15 years has pushed for federal policy changes to CNMI labor and immigration controls, said, "The Senate's good work today marks the first time that both the House and Senate have approved legislation closing the legal loopholes that have allowed some of the poorest men and women in the world to be lured to the CNMI, abused, and exploited in sweatshops in this American territory."

Previous efforts to have the federal government take over the CNMI's labor and immigration controls were blocked by disgraced lobbyist Jack Abramoff and then House Majority Leader Tom DeLay.

Meanwhile, the CNMI administra-

tion said it was disappointed with the Senate vote. Gov. Benigno R. Fitial said the proposed federal immigration controls were too restrictive and "would have a very severe adverse impact on our economy and community."

The local government fears that a federal immigration system would restrict the Commonwealth's access to foreign workers and tourists, especially from Russia and China.

"The federalization of the CNMI immigration system would be a radical policy change imposed during the CNMI's most vulnerable point," he said, adding that the CNMI is currently suffering from its worst economic downturn in more than 20 years.

The governor also said the federalization move was not based on current facts and ignores the CNMI's economic situation. The CNMI government insists that Congress should consider economic impact reports before taking final action on immigration policy changes for the Commonwealth.

Lynn Knight, chairperson of the Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands, who is currently in Washington D.C. to lobby against the federalization bill, expressed concerns with the way the bill is written and said she will continue to work with the Fitial administration on the matter.

"I'm very concerned that the formula in the bill called for the reduction of the

guest workers population to zero and trades it for several H visa systems. I'm very concerned about that because the types of jobs that the H system calls for does not apply to any of the jobs that we have in the CNMI."

"The H visa system is very inflexible; it will not work. It's for very specialized jobs and it's for seasonal jobs. The vast majority of the jobs that we have do not fit into the H visa system, therefore, we're either going to lose out or we're going to have to negotiate a new kind of labor permit that the federal government doesn't now have," she said.

Knight stressed the importance of working closely with federal agencies "to see if we can negotiate something. As of right now, and having talked personally with these agencies in Washington D.C., it is not clear to me that we will get any special deals. This has me very concerned."

"We're going to continue to monitor this and do whatever we can, whether that is to work with members of Congress or with federal agencies," she said.

Rep. Tina Sablan, one of the local officials in favor of immigration federalization, said she was pleased to hear about the passage of the bill in the U.S. Senate. She also called on fellow CNMI leaders to cooperate with the federal government in drafting regulations to implement the soon-to-be-enacted law.

"The passage of this bill brings us closer to a stronger voice in Congress, and to stabilizing and enhancing labor and immigration conditions in the CNMI. The next step is for our government to work cooperatively and productively with the federal government in the development of the new immigration regulations. Now is the time to be reasonable and intelligent in our relations with the federal government. We cannot and should not continue to fight what has been long overdue. Our economic future depends on it," she said.

For her part, Guam Rep. Madeleine Bordallo vowed to work with the House leadership to move the bill toward enactment.

Guam's visitor industry will benefit from a provision in the bill that would unify Guam and the CNMI under a regional visa-waiver program. Tourists entering Guam or the CNMI under the program will be able to stay in either location, or any combination of both locations for up to 45 days. This is an extension of Guam's current visa waiver program, which provides for a 15-day period of stay.

The bill also has provisions that would exempt the CNMI and Guam from the cap on the number of temporary work visas issued nationwide. This is expected to address the expected labor shortages for the planned military buildup in the territory.

Free healthy refreshments in today's Red Cross walkathon

Participants in today's annual walkathon of the Northern Mariana Islands' chapter of the American Red Cross will once again be treated to free healthful foods and drinks.

Subway Restaurants, Coca-Cola Beverage Co. (Micronesia), Inc., and Foremost Foods Saipan will have a food station at the Kilili Beach Park where the 10-kilometer walk to the Garapan Fishing Base will start. Sixteen giant subs from Subway Restaurants, Powerade from Coca-Cola Beverage Co. (Micronesia), Inc., and Crystal Clear water and Foremost Orange Juice from Foremost Foods Saipan await walkers at the 4H Building in Susupe.

Another exciting attraction to this year's event is the one-gigabyte MP3 player to be given to participants who are able to raise \$75 on their pledge form. Those who were able to raise \$15 will receive a cool walkathon T-shirt. Other prizes include a computer

digital camera, Nintendo Wii, cell phones, movie passes, water park passes, banana boat rides, and gift certificates from other sponsors.

Other highlights include a health fair where volunteers provide free blood sugar testing, blood pressure check, cooking demos, face painting, a bounce house and games for kids. There will also be a Foremost Health Fair Booth where participants will be treated to free samples of healthful food from Foremost Foods Saipan.

Last year, 1,500 people showed up at the event; NMI American Red Cross was also able to raise \$36,000 for various community projects. In 2006, approximately \$40,000 was raised, according John Hirsh, executive director of ARC's NMI chapter.

Hirsh said they are hoping for a higher turnout this year. "We really try to widen our participation by encouraging businesses and

groups to participate, aside from the school kids. We are hoping for a bigger one," he said.

The walkathon will be held simultaneously in all three main islands of the CNMI—Saipan, Tinian and Rota.

Subway Restaurants, Coca-Cola Beverage Co. (Micronesia), Inc., and Foremost Foods have consistently been premier sponsors of the event through the years. Since 2007, Glimpses of Saipan has supported the NMI chapter of the American Red Cross in spreading the word about the walkathon to the community.

"As always, we, as a group of companies in the healthful food and beverage sector, do our share in promoting healthy eating habits in the community, and what better venue to do so than in the annual NMI American Red Cross walkathon," Johnnie Fong, managing director for Coca-Cola and Foremost Foods, and president of Subway Investments Corp., said. (PR)

New court program aids NMI families

The Family Court Division of the CNMI Superior Court is now offering a service to parents and children called The Separating Parents Program.

It's an in-house educational program for divorcing and separating parents presented by Linda Graf, a national certified counselor and certified professional mediator, and Family Court Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo.

Govendo said: "The main purpose of this program is to educate parents about the effects of divorce or separation on their children. We start off with a

brief summary of the laws regarding custody and visitation and then move on to a detailed description of how children are affected by the separation of their parents."

The program encourages parents to develop positive working relationships for the benefit of their children, and emphasizes parental responsibility in creating a post divorce/separation environment where the welfare of their children is the highest priority.

"This kind of program is long overdue," Govendo said. "Over the past few years I have seen the problems that arise for children who have to deal with the trash-talking they hear about one parent from the other parent, or their respective families. It creates problems for them that can damage their lives. One of the goals of this

program is to stop that kind of behavior from the parents."

Separating Parents Program sessions also provide information regarding court processes, the effects of divorce and separation on adults and their children, and coping skills for the difficult transition of divorce or separa-

tion. The program is funded entirely by Federal Grant Number 2004-DB-BX-0055, and attendance is open to the public on a limited capacity basis. Registration is required, and registration forms are available at the CNMI Superior Court, Family Court Division. (PR)



PUBLIC NOTICE TO ALL VALUED CUSTOMERS OF 3 G'S SERVICES

Virgilio Ramos known as "BONG" is no longer affiliated with all 3 G's business of Trash Services, Grass Cutting, Electronics, and X Power Saver.

 RESTAURANT Moby Dick Fresh Sea Foods & Steak		
Monday SPECIAL LUNCH Beef Sautee Korean Style with Soup or Salad (Clam Chowder Soup, Tossed Green Salad) with FREE Ice Tea (No refill) ONLY \$6.00 BENTO Beef Sautee Korean Style Fried Chicken Wings Spaghetti Gelatine ONLY \$7.00	Tuesday SPECIAL LUNCH Pork Cutlet with Soup or Salad (Clam Chowder Soup, Tossed Green Salad) with FREE Ice Tea (No refill) ONLY \$6.00 BENTO Pork Cutlet Shrimp Omelet Sweet & Sour Fish Gelatine ONLY \$7.00	Wednesday SPECIAL LUNCH Shrimp Fritter with Soup or Salad (Clam Chowder Soup, Tossed Green Salad) with FREE Ice Tea (No refill) ONLY \$6.00 BENTO Sweet & Sour Pork Fish Teriyaki Shrimp Fritter Gelatine ONLY \$7.00
Thursday SPECIAL LUNCH Chicken Chop suey with Soup or Salad (Clam Chowder Soup, Tossed Green Salad) with FREE Ice Tea (No refill) ONLY \$6.00 BENTO Teri Burger Chicken Chop suey Fried Fish Gelatine ONLY \$7.00	Friday SPECIAL LUNCH Beef Yakiniku with Soup or Salad (Clam Chowder Soup, Tossed Green Salad) with FREE Ice Tea (No refill) ONLY \$6.00 BENTO Crab Croquet Beef Yakiniku Shrimp Chopsuey Potato Salad ONLY \$7.00	Saturday SPECIAL LUNCH Chicken Cutlet with Soup or Salad (Clam Chowder Soup, Tossed Green Salad) with FREE Ice Tea (No refill) ONLY \$6.00 BENTO Chicken Cutlet Squid w/ Ginger Sauce Siomai Potato Salad ONLY \$7.00
Sunday SPECIAL LUNCH Pork w/ Ginger Sauce with Soup or Salad (Clam Chowder Soup, Tossed Green Salad) with FREE Ice Tea (No refill) ONLY \$6.00	BENTO Fried Shrimp, Grilled Fish w/ Onion, Pork w/ Ginger Sauce, Potato Salad ONLY \$7.00	



Saipan Tribune, the CNMI's first daily newspaper, is looking for fresh talent to join our team.

REPORTER

- At least two years' experience writing for a newspaper or magazine;
- Must know how to write hard news, features, and business stories;
- Must have competent grasp of grammar, punctuation, spelling, and syntax;
- College graduate (Journalism, Communication, Creative Writing, English majors a plus)
- Must be methodical, analytical, detail-oriented, and can work fast within strict deadlines;
- Must be a fast learner, self-starter, aggressive, and a team player;
- Must be willing to work on holidays, weekends;
- Computer literate and with driver's license.

SPORTS REPORTER

- At least two years' experience covering sports for a newspaper or magazine;
- Must have competent grasp of grammar, punctuation, spelling, and syntax;
- College graduate (Journalism, Communication, Creative Writing, English majors a plus)
- Must be methodical, detail-oriented, and can work fast within strict deadlines;
- Must be willing to put in flexible work hours;
- Must be a fast learner, self-starter, aggressive, and a team player;
- Computer literate and with driver's license;
- Must be willing to work on holidays, weekends;
- Must be passionate about sports.

ART DIRECTOR

- At least five years' experience in the publishing industry or related field;
- Must have at least two years' supervisory experience in the field;
- High proficiency in Adobe CS applications (InDesign, Illustrator, and Photoshop); knowledge of other applications for print and web a plus;
- Deep familiarity with Mac environment; knowledge in PC is a plus;
- College graduate (Fine Arts, Graphic Design or related course);
- Must have extensive knowledge in digital pre-press production and printing;
- Must be willing to work on holidays, weekends;
- Must be creative, resourceful, and can work fast.

GRAPHIC ARTIST

- At least three years' experience in the publishing business or related field;
- High proficiency in Adobe CS applications (InDesign, Illustrator, and Photoshop); knowledge of other applications for print and web a plus;
- Deep familiarity with Mac environment; knowledge in PC is a plus;
- College graduate (Fine Arts, Graphic Design or related course);
- Must have basic knowledge in digital pre-press production and printing;
- Must be willing to work on holidays, weekends;
- Must be creative, resourceful, and can work fast.

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

- At least high school graduate;
- Typing speed of at least 40 words per minute
- Must have extensive experience using Microsoft Office applications (Word, Excel, PowerPoint);
- Must be familiar with Mac computers (knowledge in PC is a plus);
- Must be willing to work on holidays, weekends;
- Must be a fast learner, self-starter, and a team player.

If you think you have what it takes to be part of this dynamic team, submit your most recent résumé and portfolio to the **Saipan Tribune**, located on the second floor of the CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan. Or e-mail it to editor@saipantribune.com. On-island hires preferred.

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
 CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Opinion

Saipan Tribune

CNN'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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EDITORIAL

Pageantry and protest

The mounting protests surrounding the Olympic torch relay have prompted speculation that the International Olympic Committee, ever protective of the feelings of the Chinese government, will call off the 21-nation pageant. Committee President Jacques Rogge was quoted this week as calling the reports "a misunderstanding," and we hope that's right. In fact the torch spectacle, which convulsed San Francisco Wednesday, unexpectedly has become an excellent vehicle for promoting understanding—both in China and outside it.

For months, Beijing's communist rulers have been brushing off Olympics-related protests by the likes of Steven Spielberg and telling their own people that any criticism was the work of Western extremists or "splittists" such as the Dalai Lama. Yet as thousands of demonstrators have taken to the streets of Athens, Istanbul, London, Paris and San Francisco, the Chinese are seeing for themselves how public opinion around the world has been repulsed by their government's cynical and amoral foreign policy in places such as Sudan and Burma and by its repression of the Tibetan minority.

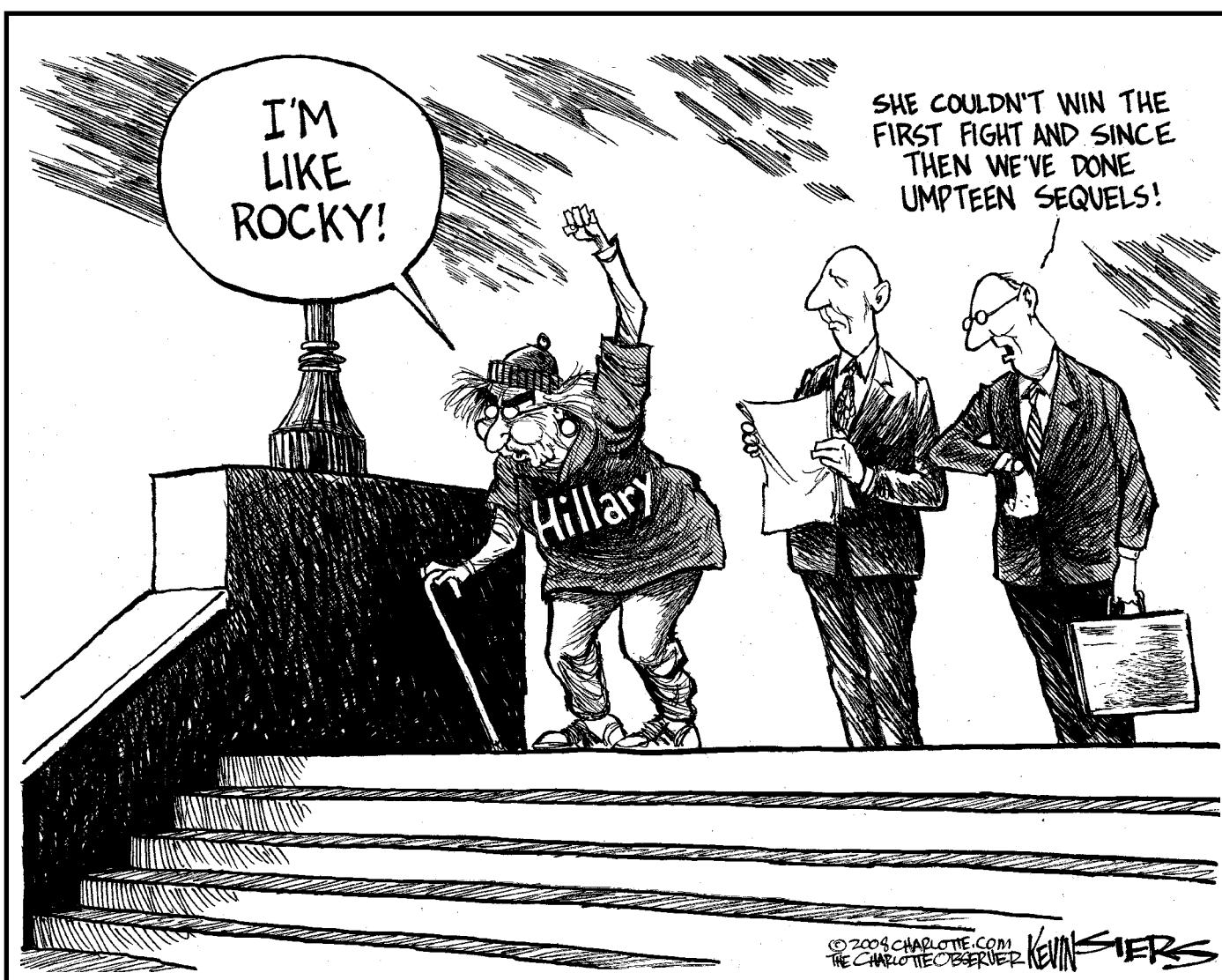
Yes, much of the Chinese reaction is nationalistic, and it may bolster the regime in the short term. But some light is getting through, as well. "I'm surprised about what the protesters did, but there's no smoke without fire," one Beijing student told The Post's Jill Drew. "I think our government didn't handle the Tibet issue as perfectly as we imagined."

Western audiences are also getting a taste of the real nature of China's government, whose response to the protests has mixed shrill and surrealistic rhetoric with the muscular shoves of the security goons in blue track suits who have been following the torch. Premier Wen Jiabao, who met Mr. Rogge this week, grandiosely proclaimed that "the Olympic flame, which belongs to all mankind, will never be extinguished." That's funny, because the torch was put out at least twice in Paris by Mr. Wen's security team, who sequestered it on a bus and abruptly changed its route to avoid demonstrators.

That, too, will sound familiar in China, where dissidents and human rights activists have been jailed or blanketed by other goon squads as the Games approach. As described by The Post's Edward Cody, Shanghai lawyer Zheng Enchong lives with a team of security guards outside his apartment door, videotaping his movements, shadowing his visitors and occasionally beating him or preventing him from attending church.

Apologists for China claim that the Olympics are not the place for political protests. That's nonsense. The Games have always had a political dimension, especially when emerging powers have used them to announce their arrival on the world stage: Japan in 1964, South Korea in 1988—or Nazi Germany in 1936. The torch relay was invented by Adolf Hitler, who routed it through countries he would soon invade before overseeing a final leg featuring a blond, blue-eyed runner ushering the flame into Berlin's Olympic stadium. We count it as progress of a sort that 72 years later, a police state can't celebrate itself that way without drawing a few Bronx cheers.

(c) 2008, The Washington Post



The GOP, a casualty of war

haven't been paying close attention lately? Then you might be forgiven for assuming that the phrase "the war" refers to the battle being waged between Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton for the Democratic presidential nomination, rather than the events taking place in Iraq. Even with Gen. David Petraeus testifying on Iraq before Congress this week, most media commentary focused less on analyzing what's happening in Iraq and more on how Obama and Clinton used the hearings to jockey for pre-eminence.

During the first three months of 2008, the Pew Research Center found that "coverage of the campaign outstripped coverage of the war by a margin of more than 10 to 1," and that most of that coverage focused on the Obama-Clinton battle. That's because the war—the real one in Iraq—is kind of a downer, whereas the purported civil war within the Democratic Party is fun and exciting.

Much like the Iraq war, the Democratic primary race has involved the levying and spending of unprecedented amounts of money, as well as huge strategic blunders by a leadership team that boasted years of experience. At the same time, the Democratic race is unlike the Iraq war in ways that make it far more enjoyable to cover: The blood is only metaphorical, and there's plenty of juicy insider gossip (Mark Penn, anyone?).

Finally, much as the Democratic presidential nomination process sometimes feels like a quagmire, there is a withdrawal timetable. By the end of August, someone's forces will have abandoned the field entirely, and we'll have a clear winner.

Would that Iraq were so simple!

Although Democratic Party infighting makes good copy, the intense media focus on the Obama-Clinton battle obscures the fact that it's the Republican Party that's in deep doo-doo. The very factors that make us wish we could forget about the war in Iraq are driving a seismic shift in the American political landscape: the likely reversal of years of GOP electoral dominance.

Much as we try to repress it, we all know the whole sad Iraq story. False intelligence. Insufficient troops. No planning for an extended occupation. Looting. Sabotage. Insurgency. Car bombs and IEDs. Abu Ghraib. And five years later, what have we got? More than 4,000 dead U.S. troops, countless dead Iraqi civilians, no sustainable Iraqi political settlement, a U.S. military cracking under the strain, a new al-Qaida franchise in Iraq, rising (but neglected) extremist threats in other parts of the globe and a U.S. taxpayer bill of \$508 billion to date (with long-term costs in the next decade estimated to exceed \$1.7 trillion). What's more, as Petraeus acknowledged this week, there's no end in sight.

As I said, it's a downer.

By ROSA BROOKS

Special to the Los Angeles Times

Brooks is a professor at the Georgetown University Law Center. E-mail Brooks at rbrooks@latimescolumnists.com.



Especially for the GOP.

Over time, as more and more Americans have become convinced that going to war in Iraq was the wrong decision, President Bush's approval ratings have plummeted—and Bush appears to be taking the Republican Party down with him.

According to a March 20 Pew Research Center study, Republican Party identification is at its lowest point in the center's 16 years of polling: Only 27 percent of registered voters will now fess up to being Republicans, a 6-percentage-point drop since 2004. And the decline is particularly notable in key swing states.

It's not just the fence-sitters who are shifting; core GOP constituencies are fleeing, too. In a warning sign of what the future may hold for the GOP, Republican Party identification among younger white evangelicals—55 percent in 2001—had plummeted to 40 percent by September 2007.

The same trend has been true among military personnel, for decades a solidly Republican constituency. In 2004, 60 percent of active-duty military personnel who responded to a survey sent to Military Times subscribers identified themselves as Republicans. By 2007, that had dropped below 50 percent. (Military personnel tend to take screw-ups in Iraq pretty personally.)

If political contributions are any guide, 2008 has the potential to be a good year for the Democratic Party with military voters; data compiled by the Center for Responsive Politics found that the two candidates pulling in the most money from military donors in January and February were Ron Paul, the libertarian GOP candidate who favored withdrawing U.S. troops from Iraq, and Obama, who garnered nearly 30 percent more in military donations than presumptive GOP nominee John McCain.

A lot could happen between now and November, but at the moment, the Democrats appear poised to retake the White House and consolidate control over both houses of Congress. The economy's tailspin also may lead voters to punish the GOP—but for most of the past seven years, the primary driver of Democratic good fortune has been the Iraq war.

Heck of a job, Bushie.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Torching Beijing's Olympic message

By CHRISTOPHER HAWTHORNE

(C) 2008, LOS ANGELES TIMES

From the start of its planning effort for this summer's Olympic Games in Beijing, China has used architectural imagery to powerful effect. In hiring the Swiss architects Herzog & de Meuron to design the main Olympic Stadium and London's Norman Foster to handle the international airport—among other bold and expensive projects that will be unveiled this year—leaders wagered that photographs of the new buildings would promote the notion of a modern, cosmopolitan China.

To a large degree, the strategy has worked. Even as politicians have weighed boycotting the games to protest China's policies on Tibet and Darfur, magazines have churned out a series of glossy spreads on the new landmarks.

Unlike Athens, where last-minute work on Olympic venues four years ago suggested a slapdash games, with a thin layer of sawdust seeming to coat the opening ceremonies, China's architectural class of 2008 has stood clearly for crisp planning and worldly ambition. However you felt about Beijing's human-rights record, you had to give the government credit for producing a tightly choreographed Olympic PR campaign with iconic architecture at its center.

Then came the Olympic torch relay.

Beginning in Greece, where security officials had to wrestle with protesters just before the torch was lighted—among the picturesque ruins of a classical stadium in Olympia, no less—its journey has been a political and logistical disaster for the Chinese.

Perhaps most damaging has been the steady stream of images produced by its chaotic international tour. In the space of two weeks, the most powerful and widely distributed of those images—banners unfurled from the Golden Gate Bridge, a torch-bearer hiding inside a bus in Paris—have managed to make a more forceful impression than the work of a dozen superstar architects.

Another bizarre episode came Wednesday afternoon in San Francisco, where the torch and its entourage took refuge for nearly half an hour inside a warehouse on Pier 48, along the city's waterfront. Local officials appeared to be debating whether to send it along its

planned route down the Embarcadero, which was packed with protesters as well as flag-waving supporters of Beijing based in by the Chinese consulate.

The pit stop turned out to be a bit of misdirection. While TV news helicopters hung in the air over the warehouse, organizers of the relay were sending a backup torch—apparently, yes, they have backup torches—from a hiding place inside a hotel on O'Farrell Street and ultimately Van Ness Avenue, a safe distance from the chaotic scene along the waterfront. There, the Olympic flame was escorted on a brief trip north by police on bikes and motorcycles and on foot, passing sidewalks that were mostly empty.

While the plan, hatched by San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom and his police chief, Heather Fong, might have worked from a cloak-and-dagger point of view—there was general confusion along the original route about what was going on—it also served to generate a fresh collection of architectural imagery that could not have pleased Beijing. For 30 minutes, the warehouse was the afternoon's star attraction. It got more screen time on CNN's "Situation Room" than Wolf Blitzer.

Reporters caught glimpses of Chinese and local officials in animated conversation in the dark interior but little else.

"They're inside, they're inside this warehouse, behind what would have been the beginning of the torch route," CNN's Ted Rowlands said. "Very curious whether or not they are going to utilize the beginning of this route."

Most of the warehouses along the Embarcadero haven't stored goods for decades, since the city's port lost its place at the center of waterfront commerce. These days, many of them store ideas instead. Ideo, the influential San Francisco design consultant company, is based at Pier 28, in a stylishly updated warehouse at the foot of the Bay Bridge. Ideo helped invent the computer mouse, an item directly responsible for distributing news, pictures and video footage of Wednesday's confusion.

Pier 48, for its part, has held corporate parties and fashion shows and two years ago was listed on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the larger Embarcadero historic district. It has been in the news lately because several teams of investors have been

competing to redevelop a 16-acre tract immediately adjacent to it.

One leading plan would use fees from that parcel to turn the warehouse into an arts hub in much the same way that the nearby Ferry Building has become a food and wine mecca.

So what ideas did Pier 48 hold Wednesday? Muddled, whispered ones, mostly. It held the idea that what had been planned as a public gathering, full of protest and celebration, was being quickly reevaluated in private.

And think of all the symbolism conjured up—at least for American TV viewers—by this sort of cavernous warehouse building. It's got clandestine written all over it. In the movies, it's where the drug deals happen or where one character clicks open a case to show another machine-gun parts nestled in black foam. It's where people go to do things they don't want anybody else to see.

In policy circles, "transparency" has become a buzzword, verging on cliche, to describe how officials in the West want governments such as China's to operate.

Two years ago, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice complained that the Chinese were secretly building up military spending and said Beijing should "undertake to be transparent" on the issue. The warehouse episode—a joint production by Newsom, Fong and the Chinese and largely improvised—was anything but transparent.

What the Chinese government is now realizing, to its growing frustration, is that controlling the visual symbolism of any event with global reach has become virtually impossible in a fully wired, YouTube world.

The athletic competition itself, on Chinese soil, will be easier to keep in check, and many of the venues might win praise as pieces of architecture.

But sending the torch out into the world has meant letting extraneous images of all kinds—many of them architectural, as it's turned out—attach themselves to the Beijing games. Like barnacles stuck to the bottom of a ship that's gone around the world, they'll be tough to scrape off completely.

Hawthorne is the Times' architecture critic.

Another Silent Spring

By NANCY ALTMAN

SPECIAL TO THE LOS ANGELES TIMES

Along with baseball and cherry blossoms, spring in the U.S. capital brings a ritualized dance over Social Security. Every year for the last two decades, Social Security's trustees have issued a report alerting Congress that action is needed to keep the program solvent. And every year, Congress answers with silence.

It was not always this way. In 1973, the trustees projected a deficit. By 1977, Congress had responded with corrective legislation. In 1981, when that action proved insufficient, Congress began work on a new solution. President Reagan announced his own set of reforms, including a proposal to cut benefits sharply for people about to retire early. That set off a firestorm of protests. To quell the uproar, Reagan quietly dropped the plan and called for the formation of a bipartisan commission. The commission developed a package that Congress passed and Reagan signed into law in 1983. Subsequent trustees' reports again showed Social Security in balance.

Beginning in 1989, however, the trustees again started alerting Congress to deficits caused mainly by changing assumptions, including those about the economy and disability rates. Why didn't President George H.W. Bush, President Clinton or Congress offer serious solutions? Why did President George W. Bush promote a privatization proposal that would have made Social Security's deficit larger? Where did the political courage go?

In fact, political courage was in no greater supply in the 1970s

and early 1980s than it is today. The circumstances were simply different. Back then, Social Security faced a short-term deficit: inadequate funding to pay full benefits by the early 1980s. Congress and the White House were willing to make some hard decisions to avert the political catastrophe of millions of beneficiaries not receiving their promised benefits, perhaps just before the next election. Today, there is no such danger on the near horizon.

Social Security will run a surplus until 2027, when it will have accumulated \$5.5 trillion. At that point, if no action is taken, the trust fund will begin to cash out the Treasury obligations it holds. That will allow all benefits to be paid until 2041, according to the latest trustees' report.

Despite the long time frame, the trustees are right to alert Congress, which should act without delay so changes can be modest and phased in. Moreover, the quicker Congress acts, the sooner it will restore an intangible benefit. As its name suggests, Social Security is intended to provide security—peace of mind—in addition to cash benefits. Peace of mind is lost when politicians and pundits make alarmist statements like "Social Security is going broke" or "it's unsustainable." Eliminating the projected deficit would end those frightening, hyperbolic claims.

But without an imminent crisis to force some action, what would give Congress and the president the backbone to make the necessary changes? Fortunately, it would take only three reforms and not much backbone to put the program back in balance.

First, instead of repealing the estate tax, as President Bush wants to do, Congress should dedicate its revenue to Social Security. The accumulation of huge fortunes depends, in part, on the productivity

and infrastructure of the nation. Requiring heirs to contribute to the basic security of all Americans seems a reasonable minimum to ask of those who have benefited so greatly from the common wealth.

Second, Congress should restore the practice of subjecting 90 percent of aggregated wages nationwide (i.e., the sum of all wages, taken together, of corporate executives, janitors and everyone else) to Social Security taxes. Because the wages of the highest-paid workers have increased much more rapidly than average wages over the last several decades, only about 84 percent of all wages is currently subject to Social Security taxes, resulting in billions of dollars of lost revenue every year. Restoring the 90 percent level, by gradually increasing the maximum amount of earnings subject to taxing, would have no effect on workers earning less than the maximum—currently \$102,000 a year. If this proposal were now law, those earning more than \$102,000—just 6 percent of the workforce—would have paid a mere \$120.90 in additional contributions this year.

Third, Congress should permit Social Security to improve earnings by diversifying its portfolio and investing some of its assets in equities, as just about all other public and private pension plans do.

These reforms would restore Social Security to balance—without benefit cuts, without raising the retirement age and with only a very modest tax increase on 6 percent of the workforce. Politicians should leap at the opportunity to do so much good and reap so much political gain at such little cost.

Altman is the author of *The Battle for Social Security: From FDR's Vision to Bush's Gamble*.

Letters to the Editor

Thanksgiving Mass

We are inviting all members of the community, guest workers (Filipinos, Chinese, Bangladeshis, Nepalese, Korean, Japanese, etc.) businessmen, concerned locals, organizations and individuals, the silent majority (you know who you are), everyone who in one way or another support our cause to attend the Thanksgiving Mass on Sunday at the Kristo Rai Church, Garapan, at 8am.

Our struggle continues, we are still soliciting signatures for our petition for improved status for all long-term guest workers from the federal government. We are encouraging everyone to come and sign this petition. We will have a pot lunch party at the Beach Road pavilion across Century Insurance after the Mass.

Our heartfelt gratitude to the Almighty God, to the members of the U.S Congress (Senators and Congressmen), Federal officials, human rights groups, and all those who helped make this a reality.

Our special gratitude to Ms. Wendy Doromal who fought for almost two decades for justice and fair treatment for all guest work-

ers in the CNMI. We invite everyone to visit the website www.unheardnomore.blogspot.com for more information regarding the struggle of guest workers in the CNMI.

No good cause is ever lost! Congratulations to everyone! God bless us all! May justice reign in the CNMI!

Thank you! Maraming salamat po! Si yuu maase!

Jerry Custodio
Human Dignity Movement
Saipan, CNMI

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.pr.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Mostly sunny with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.

▲85° ▾76°

▲84° ▾76°

▲85° ▾75°

▲85° ▾76°

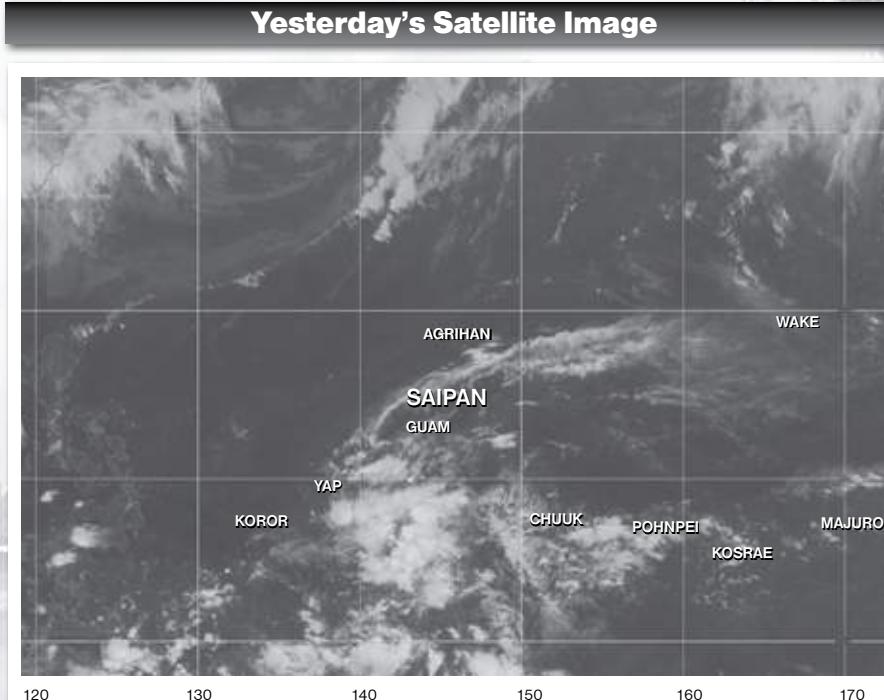
▲85° ▾76°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	TStorms	▲87 ▾77
Palau	TStorms	▲85 ▾77
Yap	Cloudy	▲85 ▾77
Chuuk	Cloudy	▲88 ▾78
Pohnpei	Cloudy	▲85 ▾75
Kosrae	TStorms	▲85 ▾73
Majuro	TStorms	▲83 ▾74

Around The Globe

Auckland	Cloudy	▲68 ▾55
Beijing	Showers	▲60 ▾46
Hong Kong	Cloudy	▲84 ▾75
Honolulu	Mostly Cloudy	▲84 ▾71
London	Rain	▲55 ▾39
Los Angeles	Hot	▲92 ▾58
Manila	Partly Sunny	▲93 ▾76
Melbourne	Partly Sunny	▲68 ▾50
Miami	Mostly Sunny	▲84 ▾70
New York	TStorms	▲70 ▾48
Osaka	Mostly Sunny	▲66 ▾52
Paris	Showers	▲55 ▾39
Pusan	Partly Sunny	▲63 ▾54
Rome	Cloudy	▲64 ▾46
Salem	Mostly Sunny	▲72 ▾45
San Francisco	Sunny	▲78 ▾49
Seoul	Showers	▲60 ▾46
Tokyo	Partly Sunny	▲63 ▾49
Washington, DC	TStorms	▲72 ▾47



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, FRIDAY, APRIL 11, 2008

Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A surface trough located west of Guam extends southward from 14N141E to 7N141E. Divergence aloft is combining with this trough to enhance scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms between 7N and 14N from 138E to 145E. A cold front extends from 25N136E to beyond 130E at 22N. Scattered showers are occurring along and up to 50 miles northwest of the cold front. Trade-wind convergence near Pohnpei and Chuuk is generating scattered showers and a few thunderstorms between 3N and 7N from 140E to 160E. A near-equatorial trough runs from EQ130E to a circulation centered near 1N142E to EQ150E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are occurring between the equator and 4N from 135E to 150E. Scattered showers are found between 20N and 25N from 137E to 144E.

Tides

Sunrise/Sunset		Moonrise/Moonset	
Today	6:05AM	6:31PM	Today
1:48AM Today	High Tide: 1.8 Feet	Sunday	11:24AM 12:54AM*
6:44AM Today	Low Tide: 1.4 Feet	Monday	6:04AM 12:26PM 1:43AM*
11:05AM Today	High Tide: 1.8 Feet	Tuesday	6:04AM 1:24PM 2:27AM*
7:12PM Today	Low Tide: 0.2 Feet	Wednesday	6:03AM 6:31PM 2:18PM 3:07AM*
		Wednesday	6:07AM 6:31PM 3:10PM 3:43AM*

*Following Day

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The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

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Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.

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A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.

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Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.

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Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.

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Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.

Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).

Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.

Photos must have been taken in the last two months.

For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

the name of contact person, and a phone number.

Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF APRIL 8, 2008

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota

CO 9313 8:30am 9:05am 3,4,7

Saipan-Guam

CO 9317 4:00am 4:50am Daily

CO 9597 8:30am 9:20am 1,2,5,6

CO 9313 8:30am 10:00am 3,4,7 via Rota

CO 9601 12:30pm 1:20pm Daily

CO 9603 3:30pm 4:20pm Daily

CO 9605 6:30pm 7:20pm Daily

CO 9599 9:30pm 10:20pm Daily

Saipan-Narita

NW 078 8:40am 2:00pm Daily via Nagoya

NW 075 4:45pm 7:25pm Daily Nagoya

Saipan-Osaka

NW 083 4:20pm 7:10pm Daily

Saipan-Nagoya

NW 078 8:40am 11:25am Daily

Saipan-Manila

CO 895 4:45pm 6:35pm 6

CO 895 6:45pm 8:35pm 3

Saipan-Seoul

OZ 604 2:20am 6:00am 1

OZ 604 2:50am 6:30am 2,3,4,5,6,7

OZ 606 3:30pm 7:00pm 2,4,6,7

Saipan-Busan

OZ 608 3:50am 7:20am 1,4,5,7

Guam-Manila

CO 891 6:00am 10:30am 3 via Yap and Koror

CO 893 6:30am 8:05am 6

CO 893 8:25am 10:00am 2,7

CO 893 5:50pm 9:10pm 5 via Koror

CO 933 7:00pm 8:40pm Daily

PR 111 6:00am 7:45am 1,2,4,6,7

Saipan-Guangzhou

CZ 3008 5:00am 8:00am 2,6

Guam-Hongkong

CO 909 6:40pm 9:25pm 1,5

Guam-Rota

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Schedule of Religious Services

CATHOLIC

Mt. Carmel Cathedral

Sunday Mass: 6am, 9am, 11am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm

Korean Center

Sunday: 10:30am
Wednesday: 10am
Thursday-Friday: 8pm
Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm

Kristo Rai Parish

Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm
Saturday: 6am and 6pm

Nuestra Senora De Soledad Parish

Wednesday Mass: 6pm
First Friday Healing Mass: 6pm
Saturday Mass: 6pm
Sunday Masses: 7:30am & 9am

Saint Jude Parish

Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am
Wednesday and Thursday: 6pm

San Antonio Parish

Sunday: 6am and 8am
Tuesday and Friday: 6pm

San Francisco de Borja-Rota

Sunday: 6am and 8am
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6pm

San Isidro-Rota

Sunday: 5am and 10am
Monday-Wednesday: 7pm
Thursday-Saturday: 5am and 7pm

San Jose (Oleai) Parish

Sunday: 6am and 7:30am
Tuesday-Wednesday and Friday-Saturday: 6pm

San Roque Parish

Sunday: 9am
Wednesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10:30am

San Vicente Parish

Sunday: 6am, 9am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6pm

Santa Remedios

Sunday: 7:30am
Tuesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10am-Baptism

Santa Soledad

Sunday: 7:30am

PROTESTANT

Born Again Christian (Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan

Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8:10:30pm

Saturday Tagalog Service: 8:10:30pm
Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am
Sunday School for Children: 10:11am
Sunday Filipino Service: 7:30pm

Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan

Sunday School: 9am
Sunday Morning Worship: 10am
Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm
Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm

Chinese Christian Church of Saipan

Worship Services: Sunday, 10am and 7:30pm
Bible Study: Tuesday-Friday, 9:25pm

Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan

Worship/Study Opportunities
Adult Sunday School: 9am
Youth Sunday School: 9am
English Worship Service Sunday: 10am
Sunday Service: 5:30pm
Worship/Fellowship Sunday: 9:30pm
Evangelism/Follow-up: Sunday/Monday: 1:30-7:30pm
Worship Team: Monday/Saturday-9pm;
Cell Groups Tuesday: 7:30pm
Mid-week Service: 7:30pm
Prayer Meeting Wednesday: 7:30pm
Leader's Bible Study Friday: 7:30pm
Cornerstone School of Ministry Saturday: 7:30pm

Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion 9:00am
Place: Vicarage, Chalan Laulau,
Call 235-0545 for directions

Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan

Worship Service: 9am
GBI Classes: 4:45pm
Prayer Meeting: Monday-Saturday: 6am
Sunday: 7am
Home Cell Bible Study: Wednesday-Friday: 7pm
Youth Service: Friday: 5:30pm

Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan

Wednesday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Thursday: 5:30am (English); 7:45 pm (English)
Saturday: 5:30am (Tagalog); 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Sunday: 6:45am (English)
Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)

Immanuel United Methodist Church

Koblerville
Sunday Services
8:00 AM Choir Rehearsal
9:00 AM Family Worship
3:00 PM Choir Rehearsal
Wednesdays at Parsonage
7:00 PM Prayer, Share and Care

Immanuel Methodist Church (Filipino Congregation)

Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal
8:00am-Church Service (Tagalog)
9:00am (English)

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

APRIL 12, 1999

Row stalls sewerline project

Despite fears of potential health risk to residents due to non-completion of a long-stalled sewer line project near the Saipan airport, the Commonwealth Ports Authority has threatened to shut down its construction following dispute with the utilities corporation. Both CUC and CPA have failed in the last few weeks to iron out differences over the contractor's claims as they continue to accuse each other of not cooperating with the settlement of about \$1.9 million owed to Pacific Drilling Ltd.

For ex-governor, same fire in belly, thunder in lungs

In Garapan Central Park, organizers of the Reform Party promise to revive the economy by abolishing rules unfriendly to business, provide more jobs, fill the treasury and prevent a U.S. takeover of immigration and labor. But only about 50 people came to fill the complex to hear party stalwarts crow about Saipan's ills and the potions they brew to cure it. Some supporters, obviously reluctant to be identified, hid behind the bushes in the dark.

HANMI seeks stay on benefits law

The Hotel Association of Northern Mariana Islands has asked the legislature to temporarily postpone the implementation of "The Resident Workers Fair Compensation Act" until amendments are made or clarified through regulations. "We agree with compensating local workers fairly and we understand the law, but we have difficulties implementing it because it's very vague - without rules and regulations," said Ron Sablan, president of HANMI.

APRIL 12, 2000

Reduction in oil prices seen

Car owners in the Northern Marianas can look forward to lower pump prices of petroleum products following the stabilization of world crude oil prices due to the increase in production of major oil-exporting countries. Dubai crude, which is the benchmark for most oil firms in Asia and the Pacific, has dropped to about \$22.90 per barrel from an average of \$25.06 per barrel in March and as high as \$28.40 in the first week of last month.

US computer companies interested in NMI

The Northern Marianas has the potential to become a new investment site for the rapidly-growing information technology (IT) because of its proximity to Asian countries and its link with the United States, according to officials. Local lawmakers on a visit to Washington D.C. met Monday (Tuesday, Saipan time) with the Business Software Alliance (BSA), an organization of giant IT companies such as Microsoft, IBM and Intel to discuss the possibility of establishing such industry on the island.

FAS students enrollment in PSS declines

The Public School System has recorded a major drop in the number of students from the Freely Associated States who enrolled in government-run educational institutions in the School Year 1999-2000, apparently alleviating pressures on depleting public coffers. Government officials said expenses incurred by the CNMI in hosting citizens of the Freely Associated States under the Compact of Free Association is putting more pressure on the Commonwealth's budget deficit problems.

APRIL 12, 2001

Gov't taking years to recover missing funds

At least \$6 million in total revenues are missing from public coffers due to the failure of some government agencies to take aggressive steps in recovering unpaid rental fees, overpayment in professional services contracts and improper spending of public funds. A report released yesterday by the Office of the Public Auditor revealed that only \$109,097 of the \$6 million government funds have been recovered so far, leaving some \$5.8 million virtually missing.

Delinquent recommendations by OPA dropped 66 percent

The number of delinquent recommendations issued by the Office of the Public Auditor dropped 66 percent to 61 in 2000 from the previous year's 181, indicating serious actions taken by several government agencies to address financial loopholes. Public Auditor Mike Sablan said actions taken by the Coordinating Group supported OPA's efforts to close recommendations and encouraged agency action on delinquent recommendations.

Business

Gas, diesel prices post new records

cord of \$4.045 a gallon.

The Energy Department expects gasoline prices to average as much as \$3.60 a gallon this summer, but believes the national average price could spike as high as \$4 a gallon at times.

"Gas hitting \$3.60, \$3.65 a gallon seems like a done deal," said James Cordier, president of Tampa, Fla., trading firms Liberty Trading Group and OptionSellers.com.

Gasoline prices are rising, in part, because of a supply crunch that occurs every spring when refiners switch over from making winter grade gasoline to the less polluting fuel they're required to sell during the summer. Summer grade gasoline is more expensive to make. Also, refiners try to sell off all of their winter grade fuel before the switch-over, which drops supplies to very low levels.

New crisis should be stemmed now'

WASHINGTON (AP)—Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke said Thursday that regulators must move ahead on ways to prevent a future financial crisis from occurring even as they battle one that threatens to plunge the country into recession.

"We do not have the luxury of waiting for markets to stabilize before we think about the future," Bernanke said in a speech in Richmond.

Last month Bernanke, Treas-

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Increase in trade deficit raises concern

WASHINGTON (AP)—The U.S. trade deficit unexpectedly increased for a second straight month in February, raising concerns that the economy's one standout performer could be starting to flag. The Commerce Department reported Thursday that the deficit between what the U.S. imports and what it sells abroad rose 5.7 percent to \$63.2 billion in February, the highest level since November. Imports of goods and services shot up 3.1 percent to an all-time high of \$213.7 billion, reflecting a big surge in imports of foreign cars. Exports also set a record, rising by 2 percent to \$151.4 billion, reflecting strong gains in the sale of American-made heavy machinery, computers and farm goods.

Retailers post sluggish sales in March

NEW YORK (AP)—With little money left after buying food and fuel, American shoppers handed most retailers their most dismal March in 13 years. As retailers reported sales results on Thursday, Wal-Mart Stores Inc. and Costco Wholesale Corp. were among the few winners, as shoppers stuck to basics. Wal-Mart raised its earnings outlook, noting that better inventory control helped to limit markdowns on merchandise. It also said that April sales should top prior expectations. But March proved to be bleak for most others, including J.C. Penney Co., Gap Inc., and Limited Brands Inc. All of them reported sharp drops in sales.

Stocks rise despite mixed retail data

NEW YORK (AP)—Wall Street rose Thursday as investors bought back into stocks after two days of losses, encouraged by a drop in unemployment claims and a better-than-expected sales performance by discount retailers. The Dow Jones industrial average rose 54.72, or 0.44 percent, to 12,581.98. Broader stock indicators also advanced. The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 6.06, or 0.45 percent, to 1,360.55, and the Nasdaq composite index rose 29.58, or 1.27 percent, to 2,351.70.

Nation

Gates: US troops won't drop to 100,000

WASHINGTON (AP)—Defense Secretary Robert Gates said Thursday he sees no chance that the number of U.S. troops in Iraq will drop to 100,000 by the end of the year, guaranteeing a heavy American military presence as the war grinds into its sixth year to the end of the Bush presidency.

President Bush said Gen. David Petraeus, his top commander in Iraq, can take “all the time he needs” to consider further withdrawals after the latest round of cutbacks is completed in July.

In the meantime, Petraeus will continue what, until Thursday, had been secret visits to Middle Eastern countries to try to curb the influx of foreign fighters into Iraq.

With 285 days remaining in his presidency, Bush set the course of the war in a speech following two days of testimony before a skeptical Congress by Petraeus and the U.S. ambassador to Iraq, Ryan Crocker.

Bush said that after the troop withdrawals, which already have been announced, end in

July, he would give Petraeus 45 days to evaluate the effects of the drawdown. That would be followed by an indefinite period to reassess U.S. troop strength in Iraq, where new flare-ups of extremist violence are threatening to undercut security gains.

Bush argued that last year’s troop buildup had succeeded in reducing violence, tamping down al-Qaida in Iraq and allowing normal daily activities to resume in many areas. Because of that progress, Bush said, an already planned reduc-

tion in troops can be completed in July.

“Serious and complex challenges remain in Iraq, from the presence of al-Qaida to the destructive influence of Iran, to hard compromises needed for further political progress,” Bush said in a White House address. “Yet with the surge, a major strategic shift has occurred. ... This war is difficult, it is not endless.”

Petraeus on Thursday revealed for the first time that he had quietly visited several Mideast countries in an effort to

slow the flow of foreign fighters into Iraq. The Associated Press learned that the trips, all taken since September, were to Jordan, Kuwait, Bahrain, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates.

Gates appeared before the Senate Armed Services Committee on Thursday and backtracked from testimony he gave last fall when he said he hoped that drawdowns could continue throughout the year, which would have left about 10 brigades—or roughly 100,000 troops—in Iraq at year’s end.

When the committee’s Democratic chairman, Sen. Carl Levin, asked Gates whether he still thought that was possible, Gates said: “No, sir.”

In his White House speech, Bush also said he was ordering that Army combat tours be trimmed by three months.

It was a response to heavy pressure from military commanders who say long, multiple deployments have strained the Army to its limits. Army units heading to Iraq after Aug. 1 will serve 12 months instead of 15 months.

Cheney, others OK'd harsh interrogations

WASHINGTON (AP)—Bush administration officials from Vice President Dick Cheney on down signed off on using harsh interrogation techniques against suspected terrorists after asking the Justice Department to endorse their legality, The Associated Press has learned.

The officials also took care to insulate President Bush from a series of meetings where CIA interrogation methods, including waterboarding, which simulates drowning, were discussed and ultimately approved.

A former senior U.S. intelligence official familiar with the meetings described them Thursday to the AP to confirm details first reported by ABC News on Wednesday. The intelligence official spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to publicly discuss the issue.

Between 2002 and 2003, the Justice Department issued several memos from its Office of Legal

Counsel that justified using the interrogation tactics, including ones that critics call torture.

“If you looked at the timing of the meetings and the memos you’d see a correlation,” the former intelligence official said. Those who attended the dozens of meetings agreed that “there’d need to be a legal opinion on the legality of these tactics” before using them on al-Qaida detainees, the former official said.

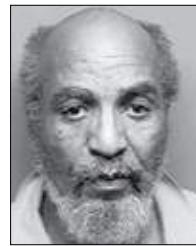
The meetings were held in the White House Situation Room in the years immediately following the Sept. 11 attacks. Attending the sessions were then-Bush aides Attorney General John Ashcroft, Secretary of State Colin Powell, CIA Director George Tenet and national security adviser Condoleezza Rice.

The White House, Justice and State departments and the CIA refused comment Thursday, as did a spokesman for Tenet. A message for Ashcroft was not immediately returned.

Civil rights leader convicted of incest

LEESBURG, Va. (AP)—A jury convicted an iconic civil-rights figure of incest Thursday after concluding that he had sex with his teenage daughter 15 years ago. The Rev. James L. Bevel, 71, a top lieutenant to Martin Luther King Jr. who also helped organize the Million Man March, faces up to 20 years in prison when he is sentenced.

The four-day trial in Loudoun County Circuit Court included bizarre testimony about Bevel’s philosophies for eradicating lust, and parents’ duty to “sexually orient” their children.



Bevel

The jury reached its verdict after about three hours of deliberations.

Before the verdict, the jury had heard only passing reference to Bevel’s role in the civil rights movement. But during the sentencing phase of the trial

Thursday afternoon, the jury saw a documentary that spelled out Bevel’s key role in organizing the 1963 Birmingham Children’s Crusade. Bevel and King were leading organizers of the marches, in which

police turned fire hoses and dogs on child protesters, drawing international attention to the brutality that was keeping segregation in place in the South.

Bevel was also a leading organizer at other iconic events in the civil rights movement, including the 1965 march at Selma, Ala.

FBI arrests suspect in slaying of pregnant Marine

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP)—A Marine wanted in the brutal slaying of a pregnant colleague who had accused him of rape was arrested Thursday night in Mexico after a three-month international manhunt, authorities said.

FBI agents and Mexican authorities arrested Marine Cpl. Cesar Laurean around 7 p.m. EDT. He is charged with first-degree murder in the death of Marine Lance Cpl. Maria Lauterbach, whose burned remains were found in January in the backyard of his home near Camp Lejeune.

“You know my name. You know who I am,” Laurean told The Associated Press while being held at the Michoacan state Attorney General’s Office in Morelia, the

state capital.

Asked if he wanted to say anything, Laurean simply said, “Proof,” but wouldn’t explain.

Laurean appeared slightly disoriented. Asked what he would do next, he replied: “Do I have a choice? ... I don’t know.”

Magdalena Guzman, a spokeswoman for the Michoacan, Mexico, state prosecutors office, said police carrying out an anti-kidnapping operation stopped Laurean as he wandered on a street in the rural township of Tacambaro, Michoacan, because they thought he looked suspicious.

When they realized he didn’t speak Spanish well, they became even more suspicious. After running his name through

a computer, they realized Laurean was wanted in the United States to face charges in Lauterbach’s death.

Guzman told the arresting officers he had only 10 pesos (about US\$1) in his pocket, and that he had been surviving by eating avocados and other fruit he found in the fields of the farming community where he was found.

The FBI said Laurean, 21, is awaiting extradition to the U.S., although local prosecutors in North Carolina cautioned the process could take a year or more.

“Laurean’s swift arrest in Mexico was due to the diligence and dedication of the Mexican government and our law enforcement partners,” Nathan Gray, the special

Texas authorities defend raid on polygamist sect

SAN ANGELO, Texas (AP)—

It was no secret that a polygamist sect that built a compound in the West Texas desert believed in marrying off underage girls to older men. And the sheriff had an informant for four years who was feeding him information

about life inside the sect.

But authorities say their hands were tied until last week, when they finally obtained the legal grounds to move against the group.

The trigger for the raid was a hushed phone call from a terri-

fied 16-year-old girl to a family-violence shelter to report that her 50-year-old husband had beaten and raped her. State troopers put into action the plan they had on the shelf to enter the 1,700-acre compound, and 416 children, most of them girls, were swept into state custody because of suspicions that they were being sexually and physically abused.

On Thursday, state and local law enforcement authorities defended their decision to leave the sect alone for four years after it moved in.

Asia

Rogge says Olympics in 'crisis'

BEIJING (AP)—Crisis. Disarray. Sadness. Four months before the opening of what was supposed to be the grandest Olympics in history, the head of the International Olympic Committee is using words that convey anything but a sense of joyous enthusiasm.

The protest-marred Olympic torch relay and international criticism of China's policies on Tibet, Darfur and human rights have turned the Beijing Games into one of the most politically charged in recent history and presented the IOC with one of its toughest tests since the boycott era of the 1970s and '80s.



Rogge

"It is a crisis, there is no doubt about that," IOC President Jacques Rogge said Thursday. "But the IOC has weathered many bigger storms."

At the same time, Rogge called on China to respect its "moral engagement" to improve human rights and to fulfill promises of greater media freedom. He also reaffirmed the right of free speech for athletes at the Beijing Games.

A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman responded that IOC officials support adhering to the Olympic Charter and "not bringing any irrelevant political factors into

the Beijing Olympics."

"I hope the IOC officials will continue to adhere to the principles set by the Olympic charter," Jiang Yu said.

Rogge spoke in Beijing just hours after the completion of the torch relay in San Francisco, where the route was shortened and the flame diverted to prevent disruptions by massive crowds of anti-China protesters.

Rogge's use of the word "crisis" to describe the torch relay and the Beijing buildup came as a surprise. The Belgian orthopedic surgeon's comments usually are measured and low-key.

He cited previous crises—the attack on Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympics and the boycotts of the 1976, 1980 and 1984 Games.

China keeping Tibet closed to tourists

BEIJING (AP)—Chinese authorities jittery about protests during the Mount Everest leg of the Olympic torch relay have abruptly reversed a decision to reopen Tibet to foreign tourists.

Foreigners have not received permits to visit the Himalayan region since deadly anti-government riots broke out in the capital, Lhasa. Tourism authorities announced last week that foreign tour groups would be allowed in on May 1, the start of a three-day national holiday.

■ ■ ■
BEIJING (AP)—China said Thursday that it had uncovered a plot by members of a Mus-

lim minority group to sabotage the Beijing Summer Olympics with suicide bombings and kidnappings of foreign visitors. Chinese officials offered no evidence to back up the allegations, the latest in a series of dramatic terrorism charges against ethnic minorities in the run-up to the Summer Games.

■ ■ ■

Tour operators said Thursday that the Tibetan Tourism Bureau told them this week to stop arranging trips for foreigners. They said the bureau cited the need for safe passage for the torch relay to the summit of Everest, as well as continuing

safety concerns in Lhasa.

"We received the emergency notice from the tourism bureau that, considering the safety of the torch, which will go to Mount Everest in May, agencies are not allowed to receive tourist groups and foreign tourists," said an employee at the Tibet China Youth Travel Service in Lhasa, who identified himself by his surname, Dong.

Dong said the government's decision will hurt Tibet's tourism industry, which accounts for a major portion of the local economy. Last May, his company arranged trips for 3,000, 4,000 foreign tourists.

Japan extends North Korea sanctions

TOKYO (AP)—Japan extended for six months Friday the economic sanctions imposed on North Korea for conducting its first test of a nuclear weapon in 2006.

The Cabinet approved the extension because the North has failed to make good progress on dismantling its nuclear weapons programs, Chief Cabinet Secretary Nobutaka Machimura said.

"North Korea hasn't made a complete and correct declaration on its nuclear programs yet," Machimura said.

"Taking into account of situations surrounding North Korea, we have decided that we need to keep the sanctions," he told reporters.

The sanctions, which include closing Japanese ports to North Korean ships and banning North Korean imports, were first imposed after the North tested a nuclear weapon on Oct. 9, 2006. It has been extended three times since.

North Korea agreed in six-nation talks in October to provide a complete list of its nuclear programs and disable its facilities and its main reac-

tor by the end of 2007.

It made unprecedented progress, shutting down and starting to disable its main nuclear reactor last year.

8 civilians killed in Afghan blast

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan (AP)—A suicide car bomber targeting a U.S.-led coalition convoy in southern Afghanistan Thursday killed eight civilians and wounded 25 other people, including three coalition soldiers, officials said.

The car bomber blew himself up shortly after the convoy passed near him in Kandahar city, said provincial police chief Sayed Agha Saqib. Eight civilians were killed in the powerful explosion, Saqib said.

Mehmetullah Khan was inside his furniture shop when blast shook the ground. Two of his workers were hurt.

"I do not know what kind of Muslims they are. They are killing Afghans," Khan said of the insurgents. "My two workers were poor and were providing for their families. Who is going to feed them now?"

The number of suicide attacks spiked in 2007, with the Taliban launching more than 140 suicide missions, the highest number since they were ousted from power by a U.S.-led invasion in 2001.

More than 8,000 people were killed in insurgency-related violence in 2007, the U.N. says.

But six-party talks on North

Korea's nuclear programs have stalled since Pyongyang missed the Dec. 31 deadline to produce its declaration.

World

US shifts enemy in Iraq

BAGHDAD (AP)—The top U.S. commander has shifted the focus from al-Qaida to Iranian-backed "special groups" as the main threat to a democratic Iraq—a significant change that reflects both the complexity of the war and its changing nature.

The shift was articulated this week in Washington by Gen. David Petraeus, who told Congress that "unchecked, the special groups pose the greatest long-term threat to the viability of a democratic Iraq."

Before, American com-

manders have called al-Qaida the greatest threat.

There is little doubt that Shiite extremists fighting U.S. and Iraqi forces have received Iranian weapons, although Iran's government denies supplying them.

But Petraeus' comments obscure the fact that the United States has waded into a monumental power struggle within the majority Shiite community—and crucially, that both sides in that struggle, not just the "special groups," maintain close ties to Iran.

The power struggle is only the latest stage in a decades-long competition between the families of the current top Shiite players: anti-American cleric Muqtada al-Sadr and Abdul-Aziz al-Hakim, whose political party in Iraq works closely with the U.S. despite its links to Iran.

That intra-Shiite competition is likely to continue—sometimes violently—regardless of whether the Iraqi government and its U.S. backers force al-Sadr to disband his Mahdi Army militia or not.

Israel cuts off Gaza fuel after attack

JERUSALEM (AP)—Israel cut off the only source of fuel to Gaza's 1.4 million people Thursday after a deadly Palestinian raid on the Israeli depot, deepening the seaside territory's hardship.

Gaza's Hamas rulers warned more attacks will follow, as resentment grows over a month-old Israeli blockade.

The fuel cutoff that followed the brazen daylight attack on the only fuel transfer point into Gaza brought charges that Islamic extremists were try-

ing to provoke another round of violence with Israel, while putting Israel in the untenable position of appearing to cause a humanitarian crisis.

Though some Israelis demanded that Israel halt all supplies to Gaza, Israeli defense officials indicated the cutoff would not last past the weekend.

Hamas spokesman Sami Abu Zuhri said Wednesday's attack was only "the beginning of the eruption" against the blockade.

Hundreds of demonstrators

gathered at the main intersections of Gaza City to protest the Israeli blockade and economic sanctions. "Rescue Gaza, lift the siege imposed on Gaza," read signs raised at one junction.

Abu Ahmed of Islamic Jihad said the attack deliberately targeted the fuel depot, where he said Gazans are forced to wait for hours for supplies strictly limited by Israel.

"This fuel (from Israel) is dipped in humiliation," he said. "If their fuel means humiliation for us, we don't want it."

Melting causes lake in Chile to empty

SANTIAGO, Chile (AP)—Melting ice in southern Chile caused a glacial lake to swell and then empty suddenly, sending a "tsunami" rolling through a river, a scientist said Thursday. No one was injured in the remote region.

Glacier scientist Gino Casassa said the melting of the Colonia glacier, which he blamed on rising world temperatures, filled the Cachet Lake and increased pressure on the ice sheet.

The water bored a 5-mile tunnel through the glacier and



This photo released by Centro de Estudios Científicos, shows the Cachet lake partially dried, in Aysen, southern Chile, Monday, April 7, 2008.

Emperor's dagger sells for \$3.3 M

LONDON (AP)—A dagger used by the emperor who built the Taj Mahal sold Thursday for \$3.3 million, an auction house said.

The dagger once belonged to 17th century Mogul emperor Shah Jahan, whose empire spanned the entire Indian subcontinent and what is now Afghanistan, Bonhams auctioneers said.

A royal emblem and dates in-

scribed on the curved-tip blade suggest it was made in 1630 for the emperor's 39th birthday. Shah Jahan's name and title are also inscribed on the blade.

The dagger sold for three times its expected auction price at Bonhams Indian and Islamic sale in central London.

It was the top seller in a group of weapons, armor, early pottery and works of art that belonged to late Belgian col-

lector Jacques Desenfans.

The emperor collected precious stones and gold-embellished blades but there is only one other known Shah Jahan blade, which is held in a private collection.

Shah Jahan's 30-year reign is known as the Golden Age of the Moguls. He built many monuments including the Pearl Mosque at Agra and the palace in Delhi.

Maharlika – PinoyNews

Consul general pleased with S.2739 passage

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
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REPORTER

Philippine Consul General Wilfredo DLG. Maximo said he is pleased with the U.S. Senate's passage of S.2739, but admitted that he does not know the full outcome once it goes back to the House.

"All I can say is that it's a positive development. However, as

we all know, the bill passed by the Senate will go back to the House. We don't know what shape or form it will take after it comes out of the House; it is anybody's guess," Maximo said.

The U.S. Senate passed S.2739 yesterday. The omnibus bill is made up of about 50 different measures, one of which is about the federalization of the CNMI's immigration

system. Once signed into law by President Bush, the bill will extend U.S. immigration laws to the CNMI.

The consul general said he is "guardedly pleased with what has happened" and that "anything that will redound to the benefits of the Filipinos on island, we are very much behind that particular effort."

According to human rights

activist Wendy Doromal, this "will establish a federally administered guest worker program on the island and help to secure our borders."

The outcome of vote was 91 yeas, 4 nays and 5 not voting. Those who voted nay were Tom Coburn (R-OK), Jim DeMint (R-SC), James Inhofe (R-OK), and David Vitter (R-LA). Those who did not vote were Hillary Clinton (D-NY), Elizabeth Dole (R-NC), Judd Gregg (R-NH), John McCain (R-AZ), and Barack Obama (D-IL).

Doromal said that, "This is a significant victory for every advocate, every federal official, and every person who has fought to end labor and human

rights abuses in the CNMI."

She added that it is a "momentous victory for the guest workers in the CNMI. It is a personal victory for me, and for my family."

Human Dignity Movement president Jerry Custodio expressed himself glad with the Senate's passing of the bill.

"We are very happy that the Senate decided to pass this bill as it will have a positive impact on the guest workers," Custodio said.

He added that if enacted immediately, "it will bear the fruits of justice and fair treatment."

According to Doromal, "Our work is not done. We still need to address the issue of federal

permanent status for the long-term guest workers."

She said she would be submitting to Washington, D.C. the petition from CNMI guest workers that requests green card status for legal CNMI long-term guest workers.

Custodio said the petition is still ongoing and that they aim to accumulate up to 5,000 signatures in two weeks.

Thanksgiving Prayer

The Human Dignity Movement will be celebrating with a Thanksgiving Mass tomorrow, April 13, 2008 to mark the U.S. Senate's passing of S.2739.

The Thanksgiving Mass will be at the Kristo Rai Church at 8am.



Nonresident workers of different ethnicities listen to Federal Labor Ombudsman Jim Benedetto and Saipan Chamber of Commerce president Jim Arenovski as they talk about issues relating to the federalization of immigration in the CNMI during a forum at the Filipino Workers' Resource Center of the Marianas Business Plaza in Susupe Wednesday night. The Saipan Chamber and the Federal Ombudsman's Office hosted the event with the assistance of Philippine Consul general Wilfredo Maximo.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



Federalization forum bids to dispel rumors

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

The fate of guest workers under a federalized immigration system in the CNMI was the center of discussion at a "federalization forum" on Wednesday evening.

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce and the Federal Ombudsman's Office, with the help of the Philippine Consul General, hosted the forum in a bid to dispel many of the rumors and inaccuracies circulating regarding Senate Bill 2739.

The legislation would have the federal government take over the Commonwealth's labor and immigration controls.

Federal Ombudsman Jim Benedetto and Chamber President Jim Arenovski were at hand to answer questions from the estimated 80 guest workers, mostly Filipinos, present at the discussion.

But while the forum clarified a number of issues, many questions may remain unanswered.

swered until federalization actually takes place.

One obvious point of confusion is a provision in the bill, which states that the number of CNMI-only guest workers should be reduced year after year until it reaches zero five years from now. The CNMI transitional workers program will expire in 2014.

Foreign workers fear they will be sent home.

Arenovski said that while that sounds like an unlikely situation, it is not impossible. "The provision could be interpreted to mean exactly as it is phrased. I cannot imagine anybody shutting the doors to the CNMI, but it can certainly happen," he said.

For his part, Benedetto said the provision should not be read in isolation. He maintained that the bill has many other provisions that will make sure the CNMI gets the number of workers it needs.

For instance, he said, the bill allows the CNMI to seek five-

year extensions to the initial transition period, as long as the extensions can be justified.

But he added that there is no provision on how early the CNMI can request an extension. The likely solution, he said, will be to make the request in the beginning of the federalization process, instead of waiting until the initial transition period is ending.

Still, Benedetto admitted that "we don't know exactly the answer. Nothing is written in stone. It is up to the [Department of Homeland Security] to draft the regulations. And I will be lying if I say they will draft the regulations in a certain way because I don't know."

For his reason, he said, the participation of local leaders and community representatives is critical to the drafting of regulations for the implementation of the federalized immigration system.

The Senate has passed the CNMI immigration bill. It now heads to the House, where the measure has broad support. Once the bill clears the House, it will be sent to the president for his signature, and will then become law.

Q: Who is responsible for the medical expenses of an alien worker whose employment contract is already finished?

A: The last employer of record shall be responsible for the medical expenses of the alien worker for up to a maximum of 96 days after termination of the approved employment contract to allow for the completion of transfers, cases, and appeals. According to the new Alien Labor Rules and Regulations, in the event of

requests for extensions of time to pursue cases and appeals, the Labor administrative hearing officer may inquire as to how medical expenses will be met in order that this burden not fall upon the CNMI government.

Q: If the employer's responsibility for medical expenses to an alien worker is expired but the worker re-

mains in the CNMI, who will shoulder his or her medical expenses?

A: According to the Regulations, a foreign national worker who remains in the Commonwealth after the expiration of the employer's responsibility for medical expenses shall be personally responsible for such expenses. Failure to pay outstanding medical bills or lack of means to pay significant bills that may be incurred in the future may be considered by Labor's administrative hearing officers under appropriate circumstances.

■ ■ ■

Q: If an alien worker files a Labor case after the termination of his or her contract, how long can he or she stay in the Commonwealth?

A: The Regulations state that a foreign national worker must exit the CNMI within 15 days after the termination of an approved employment contract or any renewal.

An automatic extension of

an additional 15 days is available if the worker is in the process of preparing a complaint to be filed with Labor, a complaint in a civil matter to be filed with any court, or a complaint to the Department of Public Safety with respect to a criminal matter.

Disclaimer: Readers should conduct their own research and due diligence and obtain professional legal advice. Saipan Tribune will not be liable for any loss or damage caused by a reader's reliance on information obtained from this section. Submit questions on labor issues to Saipan

Tribune via e-mail at editor@saipantribune.com, or by calling 235-6397, 235-2440, or 235-8747 and leaving a message at Ext. 133 or 135. You may also submit questions in person by writing it down and dropping it off at the Saipan Tribune's office on the second floor of the CIC Centre on Beach Road, Garapan.

MANILA, Philippines (INQUIRER.net)—More than a month after a three-ship collision off Japan caused the disappearance of two Filipino seamen, the remains of one of them have been recovered and identified, the Department of Foreign Affairs said Thursday.

Philippine consul general in Osaka Maria Lourdes Ramiro-Lopez said that the Japan Coast Guard has identified the body in orange overalls found in the middle of Osaka Bay last April 5 to be that of Rodryan Bracamonte's, one of the two missing crewmen

of MV Gold Leader that sunk in Akashi Strait near Kobe.

Foreign Affairs spokesman Claro Cristobal said Bracamonte's remains will be repatriated on April 11 via Philippine Airlines flight PR 407 from Kansai, with an expected time of arrival in Manila at 9:55 a.m.

Philippine consul general in Osaka Maria Lourdes Ramiro-Lopez reports in aftermath of the three-ship collision last March 5.

The discovery of Bracamonte's body means only that of Jaynario Salvador Jr.

Safe release of Filipinos in Somalia assured



DURAN DURAN CONCERT

British musicians Simon Le Bon, right, and John Taylor of Duran Duran sing together during their concert at the Araneta Coliseum in suburban Manila, Philippines on Thursday, April 10, 2008. The event is part of their "Red Carpet Massacre" tour.

By VERONICA UY
INQUIRER.NET

MANILA, Philippines—

French Ambassador to the country Gerard Chesnel said Thursday that he was "very confident" of the resolution of the April 4 hijack of a French-registered cruise ship which included six Filipinos among its crew.

In a chance interview, Chesnel said that the French authorities were directly negotiating with the hijackers, since there was no effective government in Somalia.

He said that since communication had been established

between the hijackers and the French authorities on Tuesday, there has been no news about the negotiations.

"This kind of negotiation has to be very secret if it is to be successful, but we are very confident that we will find a way," he said. "We will do our best to free them."

Foreign Affairs undersecretary for Migrant Workers Affairs Esteban Conejos said the Philippines would seek the assistance of France because the ship Le Ponant is French registered and of the United States 6th Fleet, which is part of a coalition patrolling the dan-

gerous international waters.

Asked if France would similarly seek the assistance of the US, Chesnel said: "We don't need that because we have our own force in the Indian Ocean. We have a very, very important presence in the Indian Ocean."

The French ambassador said his country's navy patrols 2.5 million square kilometers of its economic zone in the Indian Ocean to prevent poaching and illegal fishing.

"All the space in the Indian Ocean between South Africa and Australia is French because there are lots of small islands which belong to us. They are

uninhabited so there is no independence movement. The only ones we make French are the penguins," he kidded.

Chesnel noted that Somalia was a non-state colonized by the British in the northern part and by the Italians. "It has not been a very unified country after independence," he said.

On Tuesday, Conejos announced the hijacking by pirates of a 32-cabin, four-deck yacht that was sailing between Somalia and Yemen last April 4. He said six of the 30 crewmen who were on board at the time were Filipinos; and there were no passengers on board at the time.

Convicted 9 officers to seek pardon

By JOEL GUINTO
INQUIRER.NET

MANILA, Philippines—

Nine Army junior officers who were convicted of coup d'état over a failed uprising in 2003 said they would seek pardon, even as they belied speculations that they have struck a deal with the government.

At the same time, the group apologized anew for staging the shortlived mutiny in Makati City.

"I am applying for pardon. We

are applying for pardon," Captain Gerardo Gambala told a news conference in Fort Bonifacio.

"If they are going to give me pardon, I will gladly accept it," he said.

Asked about speculations that they have struck a deal with government, Gambala said: "I would like to say categorically that there is no deal with the government."

"To put it bluntly, we are not in a position to make a deal because we have nothing to offer. We are just convicts," he added.

"First and foremost, we have no deal with anybody," said Captain Milo Maestrecampo.

The Makati regional trial court sentenced Gambala and Maestrecampo to life imprisonment and the seven others of up to 12 years in prison during the promulgation of their case last Tuesday.

This came after the nine reversed their not guilty pleas to guilty to the charge of coup d'état.

"We apologize to the Filipino people," Gambala read from a

prepared statement, adding that while in detention, they realized that they had "no monopoly of idealism."

"We apologize to the Armed Forces, the institution we severely damaged," Gambala said.

The group also urged other soldiers "not to emulate our actions."

Asked what their message to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was, Gambala said: "I will ask for her mercy and understanding."



A group of people sit as they get tired of the long wait in the line to buy government subsidized rice at a lower price Thursday, April 10, 2008 in suburban Quezon City north of Manila.

High rice prices to last for some time, says IRRI

MANILA, Philippines (AFP)

Rice prices are likely to keep rising for some time as production of the staple fails to keep up with soaring demand, the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) said Friday.

The Philippines-based institute earlier warned of potential civil unrest as governments struggle to provide cheap rice amid a sustained rise in prices over the past two years to near-record levels.

"Longer term demand-supply imbalance is clearly indicated by depletion of stock that has been going on for years," the latest

edition of the IRRI publication Rice Today quoted IRRI economist Sushil Pandey as saying.

"We have been consuming more than what we have been producing and research to increase rice productivity is needed to address this imbalance," Pandey added.

Just 7.0 percent of the annual global production of the grain, a staple food of more than three billion people mostly living in the developing world, is traded in the international market.

This was because rice was seen as a political commodity

and governments strive to maintain large stocks to guard against large price swings, IRRI said.

The institute said it had convened a group of experts to draw up a list of what could be done to solve the crisis and they agreed that raising yields was the only long-term solution.

IRRI said the crisis was affecting both the urban poor as well as rice farmers who farm small plots that cannot produce enough even for their own family's use.

"Although the current rising rice price was seen as beneficial for farmers who grow a reasonable

surplus that they can sell on the market, poor farmers with small or no surplus and poor urban consumers will continue to lose out if the price continues to rise," it said.

Philippine Rice Research Institute head Leo Sebastian urged governments to increase investment in agricultural research.

"(The) impact of technologies is a driver of increased rice production, whether a country exports or imports," he said.

"But everybody is saying that investment in agricultural research is small or limited—and something needs to be done about this."

PAL to buy up to nine aircraft

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine Airlines said Thursday it will buy up to nine turbo-propeller aircraft from Canada's Bombardier Aerospace to revive its interisland operations. PAL, the country's largest carrier by fleet size, said it is buying three Q300s and six Q400s for a listed price total of US\$150 million. Deliveries are expected within the next six months. The Q300s will be configured with 50 seats, while the Q400s will seat 76 passengers. PAL said the low seat-mile costs offered by the turboprop fleet will reduce fares for interisland travel.

Maharlika – PinoyStyle

Gabby apologizes to Sharon for ‘mistakes’

By Gerry Plaza

INQUIRER.NET

MANILA, Philippines—Gabby Concepcion made his first sweeping, public apology to former wife Sharon Cuneta in a taped interview with the GMA-7 show biz talk show “Startalk” on Saturday.

“I’m really very sorry for what I’ve done to you and what didn’t turn out to be our future plans together,” Gabby said in his message to Sharon, who is now married to Sen. Francis Pangilinan.

Gabby added, “Things have changed, priorities have changed, I have changed,” and said that in their failed relationship, “Things were just different.”

“I’m really very sorry for my mistakes to you, to the family or to anybody whom I’ve hurt along the way...From the bottom of my heart, I’m really, really regretful,” he said.



Gabby Concepcion

Gabby re-married in 2004 in the U.S. to Genevieve Yatco Gonzales, with whom he has a daughter.

The actor emerged from a 13-year hiatus in the United States to stage a show biz comeback.

‘Pinoy Idol’ kicks off with 179 hopefuls

MANILA, Philippines(PDI)—So far the most ambitious and most-awaited reality talent search in the country, GMA-7’s “Pinoy Idol,” was launched in a grand debut this week.

After scouring the archipelago for a prime batch of aspirants, the program commenced its selection among the 179 hopefuls who received gold tickets.

The three judges—talent-manager Wyngard Tracy, sing-

er-songwriter Ogie Alcasid and singer-actress Jolina Magdangal—gave compliments to deserving contestants, and useful, if candid, critiques to those who faltered.

Host Raymond Gutierrez consoled the ones who didn’t do so well.

“Pinoy Idol” is the local version of the wildly popular “American Idol.” The country’s first attempt at the franchise was

with “Philippine Idol,” on ABC 5 last year. The Kapuso station won the bidding for this year.

“Pinoy Idol” hopes to be the biggest platform for Filipinos who dream of landing big recording contracts and making their mark in the music industry.

All 179 gold-ticket holders passed through painstaking auditions and elimination.

“Pinoy Idol” airs 6:30 p.m. Saturdays, for the first six weeks.

edly from the feminist group Gabriela: “Paano na ang bigamy, wife-beating at iba pang kasabanan sa kababaihan ni Gabby Concepcion?”

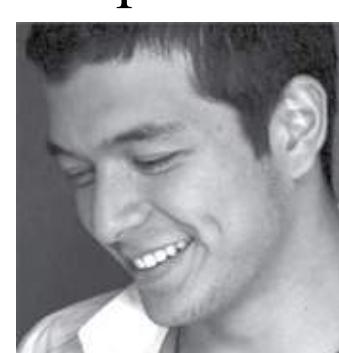
When the Gabo frenzy wanes, maybe answers will surface. How long can Gabo’s blinding charms shield him?

Cancer fund drive

Myra E’s “Beauty Inside” advocacy campaign lead by Dawn Zulueta will raise funds for I Can Serve, a non-profit foundation that empowers women by arming them with cancer information and providing services for breast cancer survivors.

Buy “Beauty Inside” shirts at Watson’s and Myra 400-E. Part of the sales will go to the foundation.

They couldn’t have picked a better endorser. She is a real beauty inside and out unlike some of her contemporaries who are all fluff with no substance.



Jericho Rosales

like a death threat. I texted Diet about it but he hasn’t replied. It could have been just a prank call. Diet should not take it too seriously, nor too lightly.

Banned big star

Guess who this matinee idol is. He’s banned from a ritzy club because of his fits of rage when he’s in a bad mood. Face value no longer honored. Mr. Big Star brings dishonor to the classy joint.

Gabriela on Gabo

Got this forwarded text suppos-

Gabby has signed with ABS-CBN for a TV deal that covers appearances in drama shows, soap operas and other programs. He is also under contract with GMA Films, which offered a film project, “I.T.A.L.Y.” that he backed out at the last minute. Gabby, however, said he would still honor the contract for another project.

Gabby also revealed he had patched up differences with former manager Lolit Solis. They had a falling out after the 1994 Manila Film Fest scandal, in which he and Ruffa Gutierrez were wrongfully given acting awards in a move Lolit was charged to have orchestrated.

The controversy forced Gabby to leave for the U.S. to “start a new life.”

“Panalo kami sa relasyon namin kasi ayos na,” Gabby said of Lolit. “Nagbatik na kami.”

Lolit said Gabby was among

the most professional talents she had ever handled. “Kung manager ka, pinaka-perfect na alaga si Gabby Concepcion. Napaka-sipag nya. Napakaprofessional. Kahit anong iutos mo, sabihin mong gawin nya, ginagawa nya. Wala siya talagang sakit ng ulong ibibigay sa iyo.”

“Talagang ma-mi-miss mo siya pagka lalo na pag may mga alaga kang medyo sabihin nating matigas ang ulo or pasaway.”

Lolit however said she would not want another professional relationship with Gabby again after the 1994 scam, which she described as the lowest point in her life. “Pero napatawad ko na siya,” she said.

18-year-old daughter shocks Revilla with marriage decision

By Gerry Plaza

INQUIRER.NET

Ina sa boyfriend nya. Si Bong talaga na-shock kaya siya ang iyak ng iyak,” Solis said.

The talent manager also denied that Inah was pregnant.

Solis also said Inah broke the news to her parents last week and that she plans to wed her boyfriend, whose family name is “Del Rosario,” the talk show hinted, on May 28 at the Manila Cathedral.

Inah’s brother, Jolo, also confirmed the upcoming wedding in a separate Startalk interview and said he supports his sister all the way. “Basta kung ano ang pinagdesiyunan nya, susportahan namin siya all throughout.”

The Revilla couple will make a formal announcement on the wedding today, April 12.

PERSONAL FINANCE

Are you heading for the poor house?

By RUTH FLORESCA

MONEYSENSE

Measures to take

We asked certified public accountant Danny Lucero to provide steps to avoid being buried in a debt hole. Lucero, who has recently retired from his work in a non-government organization, is now running several small businesses aside from serving as a pastor in their local church.

1. Plan – “In the absence of any plans, you are not going anywhere,” states Danny. “So make financial plans for your future, abide by them and learn to set your priorities right.” For instance, when choosing which to acquire first, such as buying a house, getting educational plans for the kids, availing of health insurance, and purchasing a car, make the vehicle a last priority. “Unless it will make you money,” he counters.

2. Eliminate debts quickly – Pay off loans as much and as soon as possible. “Be faithful in paying. The earlier you extinguish your liabilities, the better,” counsels Danny. “Even if you have a 10-year loan, if you can pay it off within seven years, do it.” He clarifies that borrowing money, per se, is not bad if it’s meant for an investment that will generate income. “But taking out a loan for unnecessary purchases? That is unwise.”

3. Set aside savings and invest them while still employed – According to Danny, a large percentage of our population is composed of employees. “The problem is, a lot of people who retire still wind up without a house of their own and insufficient money for daily expenses. Unfortunately, they are weaker and more prone to

sickness by then.”

“Don’t wait until you’re nearing retirement age to save money or expect that your retirement benefits will be enough to tide you over,” he explains.

“Employment can only do so much because needs will eventually be higher than your income. So while you’re still earning and are young and able, consider putting up a small business, not when you’re already retired and old,” emphasizes Danny, “because you cannot gamble with your retirement money.” He says that starting small is advisable because when you finally learn the ropes, it’s the time you can consider expanding and borrowing money for that, even.

“Learn to invest your money where it can actively earn,” advises Danny. “Don’t just put them in bank savings accounts where the earnings are too small.” Find investment vehicles with higher returns but make sure you study them and understand all the mechanics first before letting go of your hard-earned bucks.

4. Simplify! – Assess how you live and start setting a certain lifestyle that fits your income. “Stay within your budget,” reminds Lucero. “This doesn’t mean you must not enjoy the fruits of your labor but keep the extravagance to a minimum.” For instance, instead of going out to eat at fancy restaurants once a week, make it once a month or even less often.

As early as now, protect your future, so that in time, your future will take care of you.

This article is from MoneySense, the Philippines’ first and only personal finance magazine. Visit www.moneysense.com.ph for more.

Maharlika – Opinyon

EDITORIAL

Bataan

Every year, the veterans get fewer in number, their memories fading, their bitterness, increasing. Every year—or at least, until recent years, when President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and then Congress decreed that the Fall of Bataan should be detached from the date on which it actually took place—the ritual tributes are made, and everyone goes home to ignore the sacrifices of Bataan and Corregidor for another year.

For our veterans, the bitterness from annual feigned interest but decades of official neglect is nothing new. As our soldiers marched from Bataan to the concentration camps prepared for them by the Japanese, veterans' accounts tell us of their heartbreak at seeing their countrymen avoiding their eyes as the prisoners marched through town after town. Four months earlier, they'd been cheered in the same towns by the same people but now their countrymen were flying Japanese flags from their homes.

But in one place, the hearts of our captive soldiers were cheered. In San Fernando, Pampanga, the soldiers were loaded onto baggage cars, to be brought by train to Capas, Tarlac. Many died from dehydration and suffocation on the trip. In Capas, the soldiers were then forced to march to the concentration camp at Camp O'Donnell.

The exhausted, diseased and depressed soldiers for the first time encountered an outpouring of civilian support—and bravery. Survivors of the Death March have recounted how the people of Tarlac lined the roads, many of them weeping, and threw rice, sugar and "panocha" at the soldiers. Some veterans recounted that every 200 meters, the civilians placed cans of water for the thirsty prisoners. And there were shouts of "Heroes! Mabuhay!"

And here is something that should redound to our times—indeed, all times—as a cause for pride and mingled shame. Veterans recall that prior to their experiencing the outpouring of popular support in Tarlac, the few civilians who had dared to show sympathy for the soldiers received ferocious treatment from Japanese soldiers. In Bacolor, Pampanga, for example, a woman saw her son in the Death March and cried. She was bayoneted to death by a Japanese soldier.

In Tarlac, the Japanese soldiers were unable to intimidate the civilians. They kept giving food, and cheering the prisoners. The Japanese tried to drive the civilians away, but they had to give up. The Japanese ended up helping to distribute the food being given to the prisoners. One veteran would later write in his diary that for the first time he realized the truth of Jose Rizal's words, "There are no tyrants where there are no slaves."

We Filipinos have suffered many military defeats, we have endured many betrayals and misfortunes in our history. But we have been a people who have won the kind of victories that truly count: moral victories. Bataan was a military defeat, but a moral victory.

That was People Power on display in Tarlac on that hot April day in 1942. When the "battling bastards of Bataan" marched into prison, they did so as moral victors, and the civilians made sure that the soldiers knew it.

Philippine Daily Inquirer

Questions, answers

Ernesto K. Magtoto had an interesting letter in our readers' section last Monday. In these dire times, he said, people need honest answers to several questions. And he proceeds to enumerate them, with the first paragraph suggesting their tenor:

"Have we not been in a constitutional crisis since President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo lied to the people in 2004? Did she not stop the move in the House of Representatives to impeach her? Isn't dishonest leadership the cause of the economic-political instability which has sent the prices of basic goods soaring and led to deaths from hunger and malnutrition in recent years?"

"The question we cannot avoid asking," he concludes, "is this: In the event the crisis is not resolved, will it be interpreted as a mere oversight or as a dereliction of duty?"

Magtoto's letter is typical of the overwhelming number of letters that find their way into the Inquirer's readers' section these days. It is one of the more restrained, with some of the other letters positively brimming with venom. Which brings me to add one more question to those Magtoto asks: Faced with this situation, what do we do about it?

What we have today is a situation that, with a few variations, is pretty much the one we had during Ferdinand Marcos' time. Chief of the elements there is that we also have an illegitimate ruler who is making people sick by her presence—in this case completely literally. Marcos was despised then, Arroyo is despised now. We have a ruler today who is so violently disliked she cannot even parade her birthday before the nation, let alone ask everyone to celebrate it with her, for fear of sparking riots. At least Marcos then could count on the Ilocanos to embrace Sept. 21, the anniversary of martial law, a holiday, as "Thanksgiving Day." In Arroyo's case, well, I half-suspect her spin doctors had much to do with making her birthday last Saturday a non-event. They must have figured (rightly) that it would be an undue provocation to ask Filipinos to be glad their boss was born.

Rizal the traveler

Despite the wintry cold and occasional drizzle, the French like to speak their mind publicly. What we thought to be a parade on our first day out turned out to be a demonstration for Ingrid Betancourt, a French citizen who was kidnapped and has been held captive in Colombia since 2002. Unlike protest rallies in Manila, the French version is noisy but somber, better organized, and definitely serious because nobody smiles nor waves at TV cameras.

Next day, we encountered people bent on disrupting the progress of the Olympic torch to protest human rights violations in China and the Chinese occupation of Tibet. There were other rallies along the way not covered by the media, like those of drivers outside a branch of the defense ministry and students protesting yet another issue. Strikes and rallies are as common to the French as breathing in second-hand smoke or drinking those tiny cups of espresso.

One would wonder what Jose Rizal would make of all this if he were around today. Would he join a rally for human rights since he translated the "Rights of Man" from the original French into Tagalog? Maybe the better question would be, were the French as politically involved then as they are now?

Reading Rizal's letters and journals that relate his visit to Paris in 1883, one can find some similarities between the past and the present. That Paris and its environs are beautiful and picturesque needs no validation, that's what makes this city one of the prime tourist destinations in the world. That Paris is excessively clean remains true; Rizal mentioned places to relieve the bladder and they came complete with running water and soap. There is no need for the iconic "Bawal umihi dito" in the City of Light. Yet there was something Rizal found that some of today's tourists, particularly Americans, do not see—excessive politeness and urbanity.

I read once that Paris would be a wonderful place

Marcos had the courts in his pocket, Arroyo has the courts in her pocket. There is one magnificent similarity as well, which is that there were Claudio Teehankee, Cecilia Muñoz Palma, and Vicente Abad Santos to challenge Marcos' vicious inanities then, and there is Reynato Puno and, until recently, many of the justices to challenge GMA's vicious inanities now. In both cases, the forces of Good were not enough to vanquish the forces of Evil—Marcos repeatedly bypassed Teehankee as chief justice notwithstanding that he was the most senior. That was at least so in the courts of law, because the first did vanquish the second in a court higher than the Supreme Court, which was the court of public opinion. Or more than public opinion, the court of the people's will. That court Marcos never managed to win over, however desperately he courted it.

There is one variation between then and now that is not altogether minor. Marcos then was fighting tooth-and-nail with the Catholic Church, now Gloria Arroyo is playing footsie with the bishops and archbishops. Then there was Jaime Cardinal Sin to raise his prelate's staff like Moses and bid the waters part to enable his flock to get through to the other side. Now there are the avaricious sycophants in religious robes bidding the portals of the government casino firm Pagaor part to enable its loot to get through to them. Like Chief Justice Reynato Puno, Archbishop Angel Lagdameo is a dazzling light in a sea of darkness, but he has to reckon with the sea of darkness, anyway.

In a time of crisis, we have a ruler we cannot trust. In a time of oppression, we have courts that mean only to send the citizenry to the scaffold. In a time of immorality, we have a Church that means only to doom its flock. What do we do in the face of this?

One is tempted to say the only solution is to take the law into our own hands, and I personally suggest we do yield to this temptation. The principle of not taking the law into one's hands presumes a couple of things. One is that the political, legal, and moral institutions of society guarantee that the law holds

THERE'S THE RUB

By CONRADO DE QUIROS
Philippine Daily Inquirer



sway at all times—or more than law, justice and decency, and if not at all times, at least most of the time. Two is that the common good is higher than the individual good and supersedes it.

But what if the political, legal, and moral institutions, such as they were during martial law and such as they are today, do not fortify the political, legal, and moral foundations of the community but gnaw at them like famished rats? And what if the individual taking the law into his hands becomes the entire community itself taking the law into its own hands? Then the phrase really becomes "the citizens putting the law right back where it belongs, which is their hands."

The letters, the blogs, the surveys, the forums, the rallies, the reunions of clan and classmate all carry one message, the same message we heard in Marcos' time: Government is government and the citizens are the citizens, and ne'er the twain shall meet. During Marcos' time, the citizens responded to this complete divorce between ruler and ruled by creating their own "parliament of the streets," an alternative government that became the voice of the people. I don't know why we can't do the same thing today: create a parliament of the streets, however "streets" may now be defined, physical or virtual, a direct expression of the people's will that can eventually compel the allegiance even of the armed forces of this country. The chain of command itself is premised on the chain of reason, not the chain of greed, the chain of sages, not the chain of fools.

I know it sounds like a pipe dream at this point. But pipe dreams have always had a way of ending bad nightmares.

LOOKING BACK

By AMBETH OCAMPO
Philippine Daily Inquirer



Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu.

or baggage or both. Rizal knew the sights, sounds and smell of Paris even before he arrived because of the illustrated magazines his family had in Calamba, Laguna, south of Manila.

Today young people have cable TV and the Internet to fill in the gap though they are more distracted by other sites and channels. Rizal also felt like he knew Paris and France from the novels he read, like "The Three Musketeers" and "The Count of Monte Cristo." When he visited Notre Dame Cathedral, he went up the tower and commented on the gargoyles, remembering "The Hunchback of Notre Dame." My nieces had the same experience in the cathedral, also knowing Quasimodo and Esmeralda from the Disney cartoon version rather than plodding through hundreds of pages of Victor Hugo's long-winded prose.

More importantly, Rizal was firmly rooted in the Philippines. He always made reference to home when traveling in a new country. Great rivers are compared to the Pasig, and size and scale are always based on home: "Fill with magnificent houses the entire area of Calamba, Cabuyao, and Santa Rosa and you'll have Paris more or less. That is the way I figure it out because to traverse it by coach from one end to the other takes more than an hour and a half; you cannot see the ends of streets, nevertheless they are straight, wide and very well laid out, there are 25,000 coaches for hire; there are hotels on every street even the small ones and all these are filled with tourists from all over the world; trunks and suitcases everywhere."

Rizal was definitely a traveler, not a tourist.

Maharlika – Samu't Sari



FEDERALIZATION FORUM

Philippine Consul general Wilfredo Maximo, Federal Labor Ombudsman Jim Benedetto and Saipan Chamber of Commerce president Jim Arenovski listen to questions from nonresident workers during the federalization forum at the Filipino Workers' Resource Center of the Marianas Business Plaza in Susupe Wednesday night.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



Jerry Custodio, president of the CNMI Human Dignity Movement gather for a photo with members and friends after the federalization forum.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



Filipino nonresident workers listen to the speakers during the federalization forum at the Filipino Workers' Resource Center of the Marianas Business Plaza in Susupe Wednesday night.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



HEALTH DAY

Barnie's Catering's Zeny, Helen, Amy, Rose, Levi and Angelo join Public School System's Ruth Ada during the Health Day celebration at the San Antonio Elementary School Wednesday.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



PRAYER VIGIL

Human Dignity Movement members and officials sing a song of unity during the federalization prayer vigil at the American Memorial Park Amphitheater Saturday.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



Nonresident workers gather at the American Memorial Park Amphitheater for the federalization prayer vigil Saturday.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



Human Dignity Movement members and officials gather for a photo after the federalization prayer vigil at the American Memorial Park Amphitheater Saturday.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



ENVIRONMENTAL EXPO

Microl-Toyota sales associate Abner F. Venus talks to San Vicente Elementary School students during the Division of Environmental Quality's 2008 Environmental Awareness Expo at the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library in Susupe.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



CNMI POWER CLEANUP

The heavy rain last Sunday, April 5, 2008, did not hinder the CNMI POWER from going ahead with its monthly community service of cleaning up the vicinity of the Garapan Elementary School. Here, group members pose for a commemorative picture after cleaning up the grounds of their adopted school.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

No Ka Oi Termite & Pest Control (Saipan) Inc.'s Ellen Delos Santos talks to students during the Division of Environmental Quality's 2008 Environmental Awareness Expo at the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library in Susupe.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



Youngstyle

Arrival of the Pope

By MARYLOU TOUSIGNANT

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WASHINGTON—On Tuesday, Pope Benedict XVI (the 16th) begins a six-day visit to Washington and New York. Marylou Tousignant answers some questions you might have about him and his visit.

Q. Who is Benedict XVI?

A. Joseph Alois Ratzinger was born in Bavaria, Germany, in 1927. His father was a police officer and his mother was a hotel cook before she married.

While rising through the ranks of the Roman Catholic Church, he taught at various universities and wrote religious books. He became a priest in 1951, and in 1977 he was named a cardinal of the church. (Read more about him in the box below.)

There are about 200 Catholic cardinals. They help the pope with his duties.

Q. What does the pope do?

A. He is the leader of the Catholic Church. With 1.1 billion members, 64 million of them in the United States, it is the world's largest Christian church. Benedict is the 265th pope, a line stretching back 2,000 years to Saint Peter, the first pope. The church teaches that Peter's authority came directly from Jesus Christ, so the decisions of Peter and his successors on matters of faith or morals are infallible (can't be in error).

Q. Where does the pope live?

A. In Vatican City, the world's smallest independent state. Surrounded by Rome, Italy, the Vatican is about half the size of Washington's RFK Stadium site and has a population of about 1,000. The pope also has a summer home (with a pool!) near Rome.



A US flag is seen as Pope Benedict XVI is driven through the crowd during his weekly general audience in St. Peter's Square, at the Vatican, Wednesday, April 9, 2008. The pontiff is scheduled to visit Washington D.C. and New York in his upcoming April 15-20 US trip.

Q. How are popes chosen?

A. When a pope dies, some cardinals meet privately at the Vatican to elect a new leader. White smoke rising from the chimney above the Sistine Chapel and the ringing of the great bell of St. Peter's Basilica signal that there is a new pope.

You don't have to be a cardinal to become pope—but it helps. Since the 15th century, only cardinals have been elected.

Ratzinger succeeded his friend John Paul II as pope in 2005. He is the ninth pope of German heritage and the first since 1523.

Q. Why do popes take a new name?

A. It's a sign of their new responsibilities. Ratzinger chose the name Benedict in honor of Saint Benedict, a popular figure in Bavaria, and Pope Benedict XV (the 15th), who worked to end World War I.



THE WASHINGTON POST

On Tuesday, Pope Benedict XVI begins a six-day visit to Washington and New York. Last month, three students from southern Maryland Catholic schools read about St. Clement's Island, where the first Mass of the 13 colonies was held, during the taping of a video welcoming the pope to the Washington area. David Taylor, of Lexington Park, Md., served as the group's cameraman.

THE POPE, UP CLOSE

- Joseph Ratzinger, Pope Benedict XVI, is the youngest of three children. His brother, Georg, also became a priest. Their sister, Maria, died in 1991.
- He learned to play the piano as a child and tries to practice every day. His favorite composers are Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Johann Sebastian Bach.
- His family recalls Joseph announcing, when he was 5, that he wanted to become a cardinal in the church.
- During World War II, he was drafted into the German army at age 16. He was briefly in an Allied prisoner-of-war camp before the war ended.
- The pope speaks several languages, including German, Italian, English, Spanish, French, Latin and some Portuguese. He also can read ancient Greek and Hebrew.
- Benedict will celebrate two big events during his U.S. trip. Wednesday is his 81st birthday, and three days later marks the third anniversary of his election as pope.
- The word "pope" comes from the Latin "papa" and the Greek "pappas," meaning "tutor" or "father." The pope is often called the Holy Father. (© 2008, *The Washington Post*)

PAPAL ATTIRE

Popes traditionally wear white garments. Benedict has added a few special touches, including a fur-trimmed stocking cap called a camauro. Popular in the Middle Ages, it's not practical for Washington in April, but you might see the pope wearing these items:

- **Miter:** A tall, white, pointed hat worn by the pope, cardinals and bishops. It is removed during prayer.
- **Zucchetto:** A skullcap worn under the miter. The pope's zucchetto is white. Cardinals wear red ones, and bishops' are violet.
- **Mantum:** A papal cape. Recent popes hadn't worn one, but Benedict brought it back.
- **Pallium:** A circular white-wool band draped around the neck and over the shoulders. It is adorned with small crosses and has two hanging flaps, one in front, the other in back.
- **Mozzetta:** A short cape reaching to the elbows. The pope has three versions: red satin for summer, red velvet for winter, and white for Eastertime. A papal mozzetta may have a small hood.
- **Red leather shoes:** The color symbolizes the blood of the martyrs, people who chose to suffer or die rather than give up their faith.
- **Fisherman's ring:** Made of gold, it's a symbol of his authority stemming from St. Peter, a fisherman by trade. When Benedict dies, his ring will be crushed and a new one made for the next pope. (© 2008, *The Washington Post*)

BOOK REVIEW

By MARYLOU TOUSIGNANT

© 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

"Donavan's Double Trouble"

By Monalisa DeGross
For ages 7-10

For a fourth-grader, Donavan has some fairly big problems weighing on his mind.

For one thing, he's struggling with math. He tries, but he just doesn't get it. Worse, his little sister, Nikki, is a whiz with numbers. He doesn't mind it too much when Nikki helps him with his math homework, but what if the guys found out?

Then there's the problem of Uncle Vic. He was Donavan's hero, a talented high school and college basketball player. But now that his life has been upended by a severe war injury, Uncle Vic seems different, and Donavan isn't sure how to act around him.

At school, everyone is busy planning April's Heritage Month activities. Donavan's family wants Vic to go and show his wood carvings. But Donavan is afraid that his uncle will feel

out of place and be pestered with stupid questions about his disability. So Donavan tries to make sure his uncle won't be invited to Heritage Month, while Vic sets about trying to help Donavan with math.

Can these problems possibly result in a happy ending? You'll have to read the book to find out.

Author Monalisa DeGross lives in Baltimore and has two children—Donavan and Nikki.

If you enjoy this book, try "Donavan's Word Jar," her first children's book.



THE WASHINGTON POST

For a fourth-grader, Donavan has some fairly big problems weighing on his mind. For one thing, he's struggling with math. Book review: "Donavan's Double Trouble."

Kids talk with singer Jordin Sparks

By JULIA KIN, CAROLINE VALLONE AND RACHEL WALTZER
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We interviewed 2007 "American Idol" winner Jordin Sparks while she was in Manhattan recently.

Question: Do you like performing or being a regular teenager?

A: I love performing, but don't get me wrong I love being a regular teenager, too. Being able to perform is what I love; it is my passion.

To be able to do it every day and do what I love all the time, it is just amazing. I just love performing.

Q: How did you feel when you filmed your first music video?

A: It was a complete blast. You know, we watch music videos, and we see them on TV, and they look so cool. It is so different when you go and film one because they do things out of order. The ending we probably shot first, the middle we shot last; it is very crazy. And then Blake (Lewis) showed up and surprised me, and he got to be in it, too. It was a lot of fun.

Q: Do you miss being on "American Idol"?

A: I do. I saw the preview for the new season. Are you guys going to vote?

And I thought, "Oh my gosh, I was there." I did Hollywood week, and I kind of miss all my friends. We were all together for so long. I can't wait to watch it.

Q: How do you balance singing with school?

A: You know what? It is very crazy, and it is really hard



Jordin Sparks is seen at the "Idol Gives Back," fundraising special of "American Idol," in Los Angeles Sunday, April 6, 2008.

to balance those two, but I am trying. It is my senior year this year. I am trying to figure out my classes and what I am going to do, if I am going to do correspondence classes or get a tutor. I really want to walk with my class this year to graduate with them. It's hard, but I take it step by step, day by day.

Q: What inspired you to become a singer?

A: I've always sung, ever since I was little. But it was when, and it is kind of ironic, I

was watching "American Idol" when I was 12 and Kelly Clarkson was up on the stage doing the finale and I go, "Mom, I want to do that." And that is when I told her that I wanted to take singing seriously, and I have been working for it ever since.

Q: What is your favorite part about being a famous singer?

A: Probably that I get to sing all day, every day. It is something that I love to do, and nobody can tell me to shut up. That is the cool thing.

My brother, if I was singing around the house, he would be like "Jordin! Be quiet!" Now I can do it, and I love being able to do that every day.

And then I love to be able to meet my fans and put a face to the people who voted for me.

Q: What are your hobbies?

A: My hobbies include the Internet, talking on AIM with my friends. I love to read; I could read all day long. I usually start four different books at once. I play guitar; I love to play acoustic guitar. I love just sitting down, talking to my friends—normal stuff. I am normal!

Message of Appreciation
from the family of the late

†Jacinto
Timayóng
N. Taman
“Astin, Ento, Cap”

Husband, father, grandfather lived a loving full life. Despite his ailing health nothing could have prepared our family for his departure into the eternal hands of God.

We extend our sincere appreciation to all our relatives, friends, sisters and brothers in Christ who lived near and afar for your compassion and support during our time of mourning. We cannot begin to name all of the people who have helped us in so many ways. Your prayers, generosity, presence and love will always be treasured in our hearts and most especially our prayers—Ghilisow.

Ling and Children (grand)

...and with actress Raven-Symone

By DUSTIN DIAZ, JOANNA SAYED-AHMED and MATTHEW LUCAS
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We rate it a 5 (out of 5) because it had a little bit of everything, several adventures, funny and serious parts.

We asked Raven-Symone several questions about the movie. She first described it in her own words. "It is about a girl named Melanie Porter who wants to be a lawyer and



Raven-Symone.

go to Georgetown, which is a long way away from home. Her dad, James Porter, played by Martin Lawrence, wants her to go to a college a little bit closer.

"They go on a road trip, and on this road trip to see the colleges there is a lot of stuff that happens. We mess with a sorority, we sky-dive, there is a pig and we ruin a wedding."

We asked her what was her favorite part of "College Road Trip."

Raven-Symone said, "It would have to be the sky-diving part. I didn't get to really sky-dive but I was on a rig a few feet up in the air and that was interesting."

We asked her about her experience with Martin Lawrence on the set of the movie. She said, "Martin Lawrence was a dream. He brought his family to the set every day. He was just cool. When the cameras were off, he was very mellow, calm and collected, but funny. But when the cameras were on, he was the Martin Lawrence that we all know."

Finally, we asked her what she liked more: singing or acting.

Raven-Symone answered: "I don't have a favorite between singing and acting. But something that I am going to love even more than singing and acting is producing. I executive-produced 'College Road Trip,' I produced 'That's So Raven,' and 'The Cheetah Girls 2,' and I really enjoy it. I love putting out fires; I love creating things. I love working with the actors and seeing what they want and seeing if I can make it happen."

...and with astronauts Scott Carpenter and Charles Duke

By JULIAN LEIB, LAURA RUSSO and CHARLES SCHARF
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everybody is afraid, but that makes them do their job better. Fear is OK; panic is not good.

We met astronauts Scott Carpenter and Charles Duke at the Tourneau Time Machine Building in Manhattan. They were helping to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Omega Speedmaster watch. It was the first watch—worn by astronaut Buzz Aldrin in 1969—to be on the moon.

Q: Did you ever worry that your spaceship would break and you couldn't make it back to Earth?

C: No. I never worried. We trained for emergencies, but we never thought we wouldn't make it. We had some emergencies and some problems. I never thought the spacecraft would leave us stranded.

S: What you are asking is if we were afraid. Well,

Q: What amazing things did you see in addition to the stars?

C: It turns out that you don't see the stars all the time in space because the sun is shining all the time. There is no night in space. You are always in daylight. When you get on the dark side of the moon, then you can look out and see the stars, and they are very bright.

Q: How is the food different in space than from Earth?

S: It doesn't taste any different, you just have to hold onto it.

C: Most of the food was dehydrated, so you had to add water to it to make it edible. In Apollo, we had hot water so we could have hot soup or hot coffee. You se-

lected your menu before you went into space. The food was pretty tasty, but it didn't look very appetizing.

Q: What is the most interesting thing you found on the moon?

C: We found some rocks we weren't expected to find. We thought we would have a lot of volcanic rocks, and we had hardly any. That was exciting to us.

Q: If you weren't an astronaut, what would you be?

C: A test pilot.
S: Me, too. That is what we both were before we were astronauts.

Q: When do you think NASA will be ready for a manned flight to Mars?

C: We're ready now. As soon as you and your parents give us enough money, we're ready.

end things. Instead, you should listen to her for a little bit and then change the subject. Maybe you should get her to talk about other things. If she doesn't change her ways, then it might be time to look for other kids to be friends with.

Got a problem? Perhaps our panel of kids can help. Send your letters to Dear Kidsday, Newsday, 235 Pinelawn Road, Melville, NY 11747-4250. Or, you can e-mail your letters to kidsday@newsday.com.

KIDS DAY ADVISER

Kids answer kids' problems

By KIDS DAY STAFF REPORTERS
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mad at her because she never cares about anything I do. Should I tell her off? —Sick of Her

Dear Sick: Don't tell her off; it won't do you much good. She will get angry at you, and if you want to keep her as a friend, this could

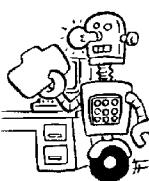
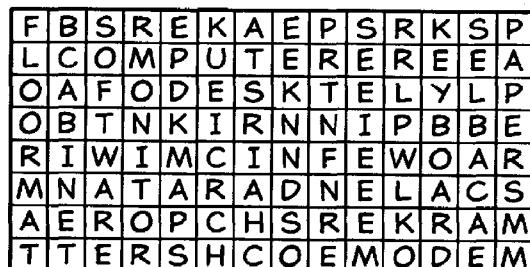
RIDDLE CARD

1. Who was the greatest actor in the Bible?
 2. What key is the hardest to turn?
 3. What goes up and never goes down?
 4. What has 18 legs and catches flies?
 5. What must one do to have soft hands?

Answers: 1. Samson. He brought down the house. 2. A donkey. 3. Your age. 4. A baseball team. 5. Nothing.

Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend



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CHEMICAL CONFUSION! That young genius Jimmy A. Chiever is shown here creating a new chemical compound he calls "HIJKLMNO." Can you guess what he's really mixing up?

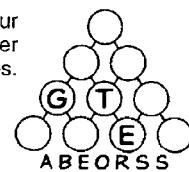


THE OFFICE OF THE FUTURE ... TODAY!
 Hidden in the above diagram are 21 words associated with things you might find in a "home office" today. They can be found by reading up or down, side to side, or diagonally. Letters can be used more than once. Listed below are the words you're looking for:

Bookcase	Files	Papers
Cabinet	Floor mat	Pens
Cables	Keyboard	Printer
Calendar	Maps	Scale
Chairs	Markers	Scanner
Computer	Modem	Software
Desk	Monitor	Speakers

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CHAIN REACTION! Take the seven letters printed below our diagram and place them in the circles so that eight four-letter words can be read, top to bottom, along the connecting lines. All the words will begin with the letter in the top circle.



Answers: Top to bottom, left to right: Rage, rags, rats, rate, role, robe, robes.

Strange BUT TRUE

By SAMANTHA WEAVER

In the small Asian country of Bhutan, nestled in the mountains between China and India, there was no access to TV until 1999, and the capital city (if you can call it a city) still has not a single traffic light.

It was Rwandan humanitarian leader Paul Rusesabagina who made the following sage observation: "There is no greater gift to an insecure leader that quite matches a vague enemy who can be used to whip up fear and hatred among the population."

Other than the fact that they were all famous writers, what did Charles Dickens, Edgar Allan Poe, Mark Twain, Louisa May Alcott, James A. Michener and Leo Tolstoy have in common? They were all adopted.

The medical journal Pediatrics conducted a study of 38 animated films, including "Sleeping Beauty," "Dumbo," "Beauty and the Beast," "Pinocchio," "Fantasia" and "Peter Pan," and its finding were somewhat surprising for films created for children. The films studied showed an average of 42 seconds of alcohol use.

If you live in the South, you're very familiar with that plant known as Spanish moss. You might not realize, though, that it didn't come from Spain, and it's not even a moss. In fact, Spanish moss is closely related to the pineapple.

If you're out in the American West, you may see the iconic saguaro cactus. It's extremely slow-growing—it might grow only 6 inches in its first 10 years of life. It's persistent, though; the largest known specimen reached 60 feet in height.

You may not have realized it, but record producer, musical arranger and Academy Award-winning film composer and trumpeter Quincy Jones has a somewhat unusual middle name: Delight.

■ ■ ■

Thought for the Day: "If you don't know what to do, call the media and at least give the appearance of doing something." —David Peterson

MAGIC MAZE • SUBWAY CITIES

H H E B Y V T Q O L I G D S B
 M Y W M O N T R E A L T A I K
 R L P M O K B E R L I N I R F
 D B O D Y W A U O S T Q O A O
 M K N H I F K G P I L Y Y P D
 B O Z X K W A U A S W U K W Q
 L O N L J C S G G E H F O D C
 M A D R I D O A N Y W C T E V
 T S Q H P N L T I K S I H F S
 E C C B Z N O T S O B Y W V U
 S R Q H C I N U M P N M L J I

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

Berlin	Montreal	Osaka	Singapore
Boston	Moscow	Paris	Stockholm
Chicago	Munich	Santiago	Tokyo
Madrid	New York	Seoul	

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GO FIGURE!

by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

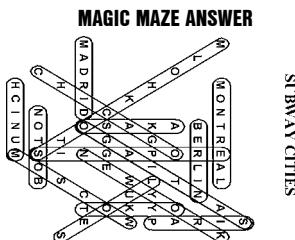
DIFFICULTY: ★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
 ★★★ GO FIGURE!

	x		-	20
+		+	+	
+			÷	7
÷		+	+	
-		x		16
3	10	7		
1	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	

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MAGIC MAZE ANSWER



I

GO FIGURE ANSWER

3	-	10	7
5	-	1	x
+		+	
+		÷	2
8	+	6	7
+		+	
7	x	3	-
1	20		

Dogs and diet

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: Can dogs eat the same food as humans? If so, why does my veterinarian tell me not to feed table scraps to my dog Jared? —Confused in Houston

DEAR CONFUSED: Dogs, although classified as carnivores, can eat many of the same vegetables and fruits as humans—making them somewhat omnivorous. Considering that man and dog have been companions for millennia, it's not surprising that our canine friends are able to eat most of the same foods as us.

However, a dog's digestive system is not exactly the same as a human's. Jared's ancestors were hunters, eating mostly meat and whatever scraps they could scrounge from the fireside of a human camp. Their diet (as well as their human companions' diet) was fairly lean, with little sugar or exotic spices.

Today's food is often loaded with fats and sugars, as well as lots of spices. Too much of these can cause immediate complications for dogs, from indigestion and gas (very stinky gas) to pancreatitis, a life-threatening illness. Other foods should never be touched by dogs, such as chocolate, which is poisonous to them.

Fresh food can be a real treat and add



variety and nutrients to a dog's diet, but should be planned as carefully as your own diet. Lean cuts of meat—unseasoned and cooked rare to medium-rare—are good, as is a mixture of chopped liver steamed with rice, carrots and peas. These can occasionally replace the usual dry kibble.

At Jared's next checkup, talk with your vet about other dietary options. And keep the table scraps—unless they're lean and unspiced—away from his bowl.

Send your tips, questions and comments to Paws Corner, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475, or e-mail them to pawscorner@hotmail.com.

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Take time for tea

When you think of "tea time," the image of sipping a relaxing cup of tea with friends may come to mind, but when those words bounce off the walls in my house, the teapot isn't whistling. Instead, my husband and sons are racing out the door to make their "tee time" at the golf course.

When my Irish-born friend Margaret moved to the States more than 10 years ago, she couldn't help but notice our always-on-the-go, hectic and harried lifestyle. She was determined to show Americans that it is possible to pause and enjoy friendship like the Irish tend to do. So she not only makes a daily event of tea time for herself, but she also shares the tradition with her children and friends.

Why not make a family resolution to slow down and enjoy simple moments together, like tea time? As Margaret observes, "By the time everyone sips some tea, slathers scones with jam and butter, sips and then pours more tea, can you imagine the wonderful, one-on-one discussions a person can have with children, family and friends?"

Here are some ideas to get started:

Kids can help by setting the "tea tray," a necessary component for tea time. You'll need a sugar bowl, pitcher for milk and a small plate with sliced lemons. Cover the coffee table or dining-room table with a white lace cloth. (She collects hers at tag sales.) Then place cups, saucers, spoons and napkins around the table. Each person can be given a dessert plate and butter knife



used tea leaves in compost pile or scatter them around your growing roses. Serve with whole milk if you wish. It gives tea a nice color and rounds out the flavor. Children tend to prefer it that way.

Donna's Day award-winning television series "Donna's Day" airs on public television nationwide. Visit www.donnasday.com to find out when it airs on your local PBS station and to sign up for Donna's e-newsletter.

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Life & Style

NEW YORK (AP)—Worn down a bit by work, singer Tift Merritt poured herself a glass of wine one night, sat at the computer and typed “Paris,” “apartment” and “piano” into an Internet search engine.

She quickly found some possibilities, and set out on what she figured would be a two-week vacation.

Instead, it turned into an adventure of more than three months that refreshed her personally and professionally. The results can be heard on her new disc, “Another Country,” made up of songs written on a piano in a Paris apartment.

Merritt, a North Carolina native who now lives in New York, was nominated four years ago for a best country album Grammy Award. But she’s been in a common trap since then, her music considered not quite country enough for country radio stations and too country-flavored for pop music stations. Her new disc leans more toward the pop singer-songwriter territory.

Merritt had briefly thought of quitting after being discouraged by a year on the road prior to her Paris trip.

“It really takes the sap out of you,” she told The Associated Press. “You’re kind of giving yourself to people you don’t know really well, and then you return to your life and it isn’t there anymore.”

She had spent time in France as a student; now, in her 30s,



Singer and songwriter Tift Merritt relaxes at Schubas Tavern in Chicago, Friday, April 4, 2008, before a performance. AP

she remembered enough of the language to get by. Being in a society where everyone speaks a different language can be disorienting—and electric.

“You have to look at people

differently,” she said. “You have to look longer. You have to really make an effort to communicate and figure out what’s going on and you see the sort of elemental things that happen

to us every day that most of the time we just walk past.”

It was a relief not to take things for granted. “There’s something simple and direct that runs through this record because

of that,” she said.

At the start, the piano was there for fun and companionship—not for work. That changed.

“I was really surprised that

I was writing,” she said, “because I was really at a point where I didn’t have anything to say at all. I needed to catch up on sleep and eat more vegetables. When I wrote ‘Another Country,’ that was my best attempt at capturing that feeling of being like a stranger in the world.”

You’d assume the title has dual meanings—references to both her trip and her uneasy relationship with the country music establishment.

Instead, a third becomes obvious, about getting lost in the world of another person. “Love is another country,” Merritt sings, “and I want to go.”

After her first trip to Paris ended, she went back two or three times to wrap up her writing. She even wrote a song in French that she debuted at a concert there.

Merritt is tired of being told by people that her music isn’t easy to categorize. Maybe it will be harder on her career, but she said she’s not going to play that game anymore. She made “Another Country” to be direct—one person talking to another.

The music business’ continuing collapse may work in her favor.

“There is so much wisdom in customizing your career to what you like, what you want to do,” she said. “It’s really an exciting time, and it’s certainly much better than the ‘my way or the highway’ type of situation.”

Neil Patrick Harris: Say no to Britney!

NEW YORK (AP)—If Neil Patrick Harris had his way, Britney Spears would be banned from the set of “How I Met Your Mother.” Nothing against the pop singer personally—he just doesn’t think the show should bring guests aboard for a ratings boost alone.

“I’m in the minority that our show does not need stunt casting in order to succeed,” Harris declared during a break from taping the Monday night CBS sitcom, which has grown a cult following since its 2005 debut.

“I worry that if they start ‘Will and Grace’—ing us too much, that the show will suffer. And we’re all really proud of the content of the show. I mean, viewership is not our game. It’s the network and the studio’s game, you know. It’s the promotion department’s game,” the actor, who plays womanizer Barney, told The Associated Press in an interview last week.

Spears has been the most high-profile guest star to visit the set, following past appearances by Mandy Moore, Enrique Iglesias and Heidi Klum. But her capable March 24 cameo—feverishly promoted, anticipated, blogged-about, critiqued, analyzed and, ultimately, well-reviewed—gave Harris pause to voice a concern: Was the show selling out?

“We wish we weren’t opposite an awkward reality dancing competition,” he said. “But we have no say about that. I just am a real fan of our content. I think we have a great show going, and I hope it’s not screwed up by the desire for 700,000 more viewers.”

Make that 1 million more viewers for the Britney episode, which grabbed an audience of 10.6 million tuning in as Spears filled her small role as a bubbly receptionist. Among the 18-to-49-

year-old demographic, it was the most-watched episode of the series ever.

The show has an average viewership this season of 8 million per episode, including reruns; last season, it attracted an average of 8.5 million viewers each showing. It returned with all-new episodes last month following the writers strike, capturing 9.6 million viewers the week before Spears’ appearance and slipping back to 9.5 million the week after.

Executive producer Carter Bays told the AP he’d be open to another Spears guest spot. As it happened, the pop star’s camp approached the show, and Bays is proud of the result: “We had no illusions about what the stakes were. And if it was classic stunt casting, like, ‘Oh, my tour bus broke down outside’ and I just go, ‘Wow, Britney Spears, what are you doing here?’ then, like, we’re just flying over that shark real fast. It was a great character and I think she played it well. ... I’m glad that we didn’t sensationalize the character in any way.”

The show concluded with Spears’ secretary flirting with Barney. The following episode, which aired last Monday, introduced a “mystery woman” who’s been warning other women not to date the single-minded cad. Asked if Spears might turn out to be the secret slanderer, Bays said: “Could be. There’s no reason why not.” He also suggested the talented actress Sarah Chalke, who guest starred alongside Spears.

Asked for his guess, Harris said: “No telling, but based on the stunt casting we’ve done in the past I’m guessing Tara Reid.”

“How I Met Your Mother” stars Harris, Josh Radnor, Cobie Smulders, Alyson Hannigan and Jason Segel as an urban family of twenty-some-



From left, Cast members Josh Radnor, Neil Patrick Harris, Jason Segel, Alyson Hannigan, and Cobie Smulders are seen while taping an episode of “How I Met Your Mother” in Los Angeles on Thursday, April 3, 2008. AP

thing New Yorkers. A familiar premise (see: “Friends”), yet the show has stood apart through its own brand of clever writing and in-jokes, cast chemistry and signature use of flashbacks.

Still, it lacks the broad appeal of shows like “Friends,” which had a celebrity cast and a string of celebrity guest stars, and fellow CBS sitcom “Two and a Half Men.” It doesn’t have the industry recognition of NBC critical darlings “30 Rock” and “The Office.” Its only major Emmy nomination went to scene-stealer Harris last year for outstanding supporting actor in a comedy series.

“The challenge for the show has always been to get more eyeballs on it,” said Radnor, who portrays unlucky-in-love architect Ted. “The

only thing—and this is not a slam on any of the other shows on CBS on Monday—but the only thing we have in common with those shows is we’re half an hour, multi-camera shows with a laugh track.”

Radnor compared the show to an under-the-radar, yet-to-be-discovered band.

“That’s why the people who love this show loooooooove this show because I think it’s like your favorite band that hasn’t gotten popular enough for you to start hating it,” he said. “So you can still kind of love it and wear the T-shirt and speak in code with the other people who are on to it, but it hasn’t tipped into this kind of phenomenon where you start to turn on it.”

No charity for 'Idol' finalist

LOS ANGELES (AP)—“American Idol” said g’day to Michael Johns.

The Australian-born singer was eliminated Thursday from Fox’s popular singing competition as the contest was narrowed down to the top seven finalists following Wednesday’s “Idol Gives Back” charity event.

The dismissal came as a surprise to many since Johns had never been in the show’s bottom three vote-getters and no contestants were evicted after last year’s special “Idol” fundraiser. The hunky rocker, judges and his competitors all seemed stunned by the eviction.

Johns, 29, sang Aerosmith’s “Dream On” during Tuesday’s inspirational-themed performance show. Simon Cowell and Randy Jackson didn’t think the song choice suited Johns, although Paula Abdul thought the selection was perfect.

Carly Smithson and Syesha Mercado, who’ve both previously been in the bottom three, were the other lowest vote-getters.

Before the elimination, host Ryan Seacrest told the audience that “Idol Gives Back” had garnered over \$60 million thus far—and reminded viewers that donations were still being accepted. Last year, \$76 million was raised for underprivileged children. “Idol” executive producer Nigel Lythgoe had earlier anticipated this year’s event would lure \$100 million.

Ratings were significantly down for “Idol Gives Back,” which featured musical performances by Fergie and Miley Cyrus. Despite being the top-rated show Wednesday, 17.5 million viewers tuned into the second “Idol Give Back” special, down from last year when 26.9 million viewers watched, according to Nielsen Media Research.



In this undated image released by FOX, “American Idol” contestant Michael Johns, 29, of Los Angeles, is shown.

Dolly Parton helps eagle return to wild

DANDRIDGE, Tenn. (AP)—Dolly Parton visited the woods overlooking Douglas Lake near the Great Smoky Mountains in designer buckskins and 4-inch heels. But she knew she wasn’t the star of this show. It was a young American bald eagle.

The eagle was blown from its nest several weeks ago in Florida. On Thursday, it was returned to the wild by the American Eagle Foundation, which is

based at the 62-year-old singer’s Dollywood theme park.

Some 90 eagles have been released from the same spot since the 1990s. But this marked the first time that their country music benefactor had seen it in person.

Before she helped open the cage and watched the bird soar away, Parton named it “Liberty.”

“I thought that sounded better than Baldy,” she said.

Many charges dropped in wiretap case

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A total of 28 charges were dropped at the prosecution’s request Thursday in the Hollywood wiretaps case against private investigator Anthony Pellicano and a co-defendant.

Also Thursday, a lawyer who once represented Sylvester Stal-

one in a lawsuit testified that Pellicano had information about the case that he could have obtained only through illegal wiretaps.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Dan Saunders said the government wanted some of the charges against Pellicano and former Los Angeles police Sgt. Mark

Arneson because some of the alleged victims weren’t available to testify and other counts were redundant. More than 35 charges remain against the men. They and three other co-defendants have pleaded not guilty.

Pellicano is accused of running a criminal enterprise that

used wiretaps and other clandestine tactics to dig up dirt to help his clients gain an advantage in legal and other disputes. The dropped counts mostly involved wire fraud that authorities had alleged involved Arneson searching law enforcement databases for Pellicano.

ENTERTAINMENT TIDBITS

Sean Penn, wife withdraw divorce papers

SAN RAFAEL, Calif. (AP)—Sean Penn and his wife, Robin Wright Penn, have withdrawn their divorce petition. A Marin County Superior Court commissioner has dismissed the divorce proceedings between the couple, who call the community of Ross, Calif., their home. Neither attended Tuesday’s hearing, and no comment has been released on the latest development. The dismissal came a day after they attended an Eddie Vedder concert at the University of California at Berkeley, where the actor reportedly went on stage to dedicate a song to Wright Penn. They filed for divorce in December.

CBS axes reality show after 1 episode

NEW YORK (AP)—The secret talents of celebrities will remain hidden. CBS is axing its new reality show “Secret Talents of the Stars” after only one episode. The first airing Wednesday had former “Star Trek” actor

George Takei singing “On the Road Again.” Only 4.6 million people tuned in—and thousands tuned away as the hour continued. The reality show also had Clint Black doing standup comedy and Mya tap-dancing. Danny Bonaduce is among the celebrities whose secret talents will be kept to himself. CBS officials say news programming is expected as a temporary replacement.

Mischa Barton pleads no contest to DUI

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP)—Mischa Barton has pleaded no contest to drunken driving for a December arrest in West Hollywood. The former star of TV’s “The O.C.” wasn’t present in a Beverly Hills courtroom Thursday as her lawyer entered no-contest pleas on her behalf to misdemeanor driving under the influence and driving without a license. The 22-year-old actress was arrested Dec. 27 after sheriff’s deputies saw her car straddling lanes and failing to signal for a turn. Lawyer Anthony Salerno says Barton will be fined, placed on three years’ proba-

tion and must attend an alcohol education program. Salerno says Barton assumes full responsibility for her actions.

New Broadway musical announced

NEW YORK (AP)—“Pure Country,” a new musical based on a 1992 movie of the same name, is coming to Broadway next season. Its producers said Thursday it will be directed by Peter Masterson, who is best known for the Broadway musical hit, “The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas.” The music will be by Grammy nominee Steve Dorff, composer of Celine Dion’s “Miracle” and the hit movie theme “Every Which Way But Loose.” John Bettis, a Grammy nominee whose songs include Madonna’s “Crazy for You,” will supply the lyrics. “Pure Country” tells the story of a country music superstar who begins to find himself after he walks out of an over-hyped concert tour. The 1992 movie starred George Strait and Lesley Ann Warren. Previews will begin in spring 2009, with casting to be announced at a later date.

Adopted daughter’s anger may stem from lack of early love

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: Five years ago, my husband and I adopted two siblings who have “special circumstances.” The problem is my youngest child hates me and does everything possible to get me to leave.

Is it me she hates, or could it be her birth mother? She was 3 when she was removed from her birth parents and 6 when we brought her and her sister to live with us.

Do you think my child has forgotten how to love, or maybe she was never taught?



Dear Abby

TROUBLED MOM IN MINNESOTA

DEAR TROUBLED MOM: Not having met your daughter, I am unable to tell you what her problem is. However, I can tell you this: Before the situation goes any further, I urge you to have your little girl evaluated by a qualified mental health professional because that child’s problem may not be an inability to love, but a bonding disorder.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My husband, “Duane,” had a serious drinking problem for more than 25 years. He has dried out. However, the past has come back to haunt us. His daughter, “Jackie,” told me that when she was 2, Duane raped her. Jackie said she still dreams about wanting to kill him. I can’t blame her, and I don’t believe she’s lying.

I do not plan to divorce Duane. I think Jackie’s mother should have prosecuted him when it happened, but she failed her daughter just as my husband did.

Having been a victim of rape myself, I can relate to Jackie’s pain. I was 6 when my dad began molesting me. I would like to be supportive, help to heal these wrongs and watch Jackie blossom into a wonderful, loving person—a side of her she has already shown me she possesses.

I love Duane, but I’m not IN love with him. He can be a jerk sometimes. I think joint counseling might help. She and her brother both have terrible memories of “Dad.” Since we’ve been married, we have had a child together.

How can I help mend their relationship and allow Duane to face up to what he did? Jackie suffers all the time because of it. This happened more than 30 years ago.

“SAMANTHA” IN OHIO

DEAR “SAMANTHA”: As well-meaning as you are, do not involve yourself in Jackie’s healing process. She could benefit from professional counseling, but it should not be “joint” counseling until and unless she’s ready for it.

Frankly, you could benefit from some counseling yourself. Cycles of abuse often repeat themselves in families, and by marrying Duane, you appear to have married a carbon copy of your own father/molester. Not knowing your husband, I do not know how much of a “jerk” Duane can be “sometimes.” If you haven’t already done so, you should talk to your own child about appropriate touching and ask whether he or she has been molested, too.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: Why do people think it’s OK to go up to someone with long hair in a ponytail and pull it? I am currently growing my hair for Locks of Love. It makes me furious when people come up and jerk it. Not only is it painful, but isn’t it a form of assault? What would be an appropriate response?

HAIR TODAY, GONE TOMORROW

DEAR HAIR TODAY: Pulling someone’s ponytail is a childish impulse, and yes, it is a form of assault—but probably not prosecutable. The proper response is, “Ouch! Don’t do that again. It hurts!”

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order “How to Be Popular.” Send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

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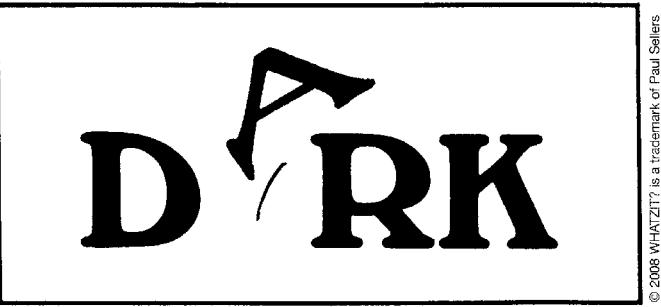
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1 COMMERCIAL CLEANER (SM 0066)

Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: medical & worker's compensation. Contact: Mingli Corporation @234-2150.

1 SALES SUPERVISOR (SM 0067)

Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: medical & worker's compensation. Contact: Mingli Corporation @234-2150.

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Mavs top Jazz to clinch playoff spot



DALLAS (AP)—Dirk Nowitzki swished a 3-pointer with 0.9 seconds left, breaking a tie and giving the Dallas Mavericks a 97-94 victory over the Utah Jazz on Thursday night that also clinched a playoff berth.

Dallas got in on the combination of the victory and Golden State losing to Denver. With three games left, the Mavericks have a two-game edge on the Nuggets for the No. 7 seed.

Nowitzki scored 32 points for the second time in five games since returning from knee and ankle injuries. The victory wasn't sealed until Deron Williams, who banked in a tying 3-pointer with 5.8 seconds left, missed a long 3 with Nowitzki flying at him.

The Mavs have reached 50 wins and made the playoffs for eight straight seasons.

As recently as two weeks ago, fans weren't sure Dallas was going to make it—the team was struggling after trading for Jason Kidd in February, then Nowitzki went down.

But now the Mavericks are rolling. They won in Phoenix on Sunday and they answered every challenge from Utah this time. Both were the kind of tight games against good teams that Dallas was losing just a few weeks ago.

The Mavs led by 14 early on, but neither team led by more than five over the last 15 minutes of this game. There were 14 lead changes and seven ties in that span, and Dallas played nearly all of it without Josh Howard, who was lost to a bruised right knee early in the third quarter.

So Nowitzki and Jason Terry took over.

Terry scored all 21 of his points in the second half, with



Dallas Mavericks forward Dirk Nowitzki, from Germany, celebrates his 3-point basket against the Utah Jazz in the final seconds of their NBA game in Dallas, Thursday, April 10, 2008.

13 coming in the final period. Nowitzki scored 12 in the fourth. For the game, he was 12-of-23, including 4-of-5 on 3s.

Kidd scored Dallas' first sev-

en points but didn't score again. He still contributed seven assists and six rebounds.

Memhet Okur had 19 points and 14 rebounds for Utah, which

had won four in a row and seven of eight. The Jazz clinched a division title in their previous game, and are only playing for seeding now. The Jazz will be

Sonics' e-mails seem contradictory

SEATTLE (AP)—E-mail messages between SuperSonics owner Clay Bennett and team co-owners appear to show Bennett misled NBA commissioner David Stern on the group's intentions to move the team to Oklahoma City before all avenues for a new arena in Seattle were closed.

The messages have become part of the team's dispute with the city of Seattle over the two years remaining on its KeyArena lease. Bennett is trying to buy out the lease so he can move the Sonics to his hometown for the 2008-09 season. The city claims the team must occupy the arena through 2009-10. The trial is scheduled to begin June 16.

U.S. District Judge Marsha Pechman is scheduled to hear the trial. She declined through a spokeswoman to comment on the e-mail messages, which the city first released to The Seattle

Times and then to The Associated Press and others.

The NBA's board of governors are scheduled to vote next week on Bennett's application to relocate the Sonics to Oklahoma.

Pechman ruled in February that as part of the lawsuit's discovery process, the ownership group must give Seattle's lawyers copies of e-mail sent from or to all of its eight board members that could potentially be relevant to the case.

In one of those messages, dated April 17, 2007—during a one-year period in which Bennett was professing a "good-faith" effort to get a new arena built that would keep the Sonics in Seattle—team co-owner Tom Ward wrote to Bennett from Oklahoma City: "Is there any way to move here for next season or are we doomed to have another lame duck season in Seattle?"

Bennett replied: "I am a man possessed! Will do everything we can. Thanks for hanging with me boys. the game is getting started!"

Ward answered back: "That's the spirit!! I am willing to help any way I can to watch ball here next year"

Co-owner Aubrey McClendon then wrote: "me too, thanks, Clay!"

Stern fined McClendon \$250,000 last Aug. 23, two weeks after he told an Oklahoma City publication his group didn't buy the Sonics to keep them in Seattle. The comments by McClendon, an Oklahoma City energy tycoon and one of four original partners who bought the Sonics in July 2006 for \$350 million, were at odds with Stern's stated hope of keeping the Sonics in Seattle.

Last Aug. 18, days after Mc-

Clendon's comments were published, Bennett wrote a lengthy e-mail to Stern. It included a fawning section in which Bennett told the commissioner he was "an extraordinarily gifted executive ... with a rare and unique charisma that brings out the best in everyone you touch ... you are just one of my favorite people on earth and I so cherish our relationship Sonics business aside."

Bennett then wrote moving the Sonics to Oklahoma City was not yet being discussed within the ownership group.

"I would never breach your trust," Bennett e-mailed Stern. "As absolutely remarkable as it may seem, Aubrey and I have NEVER discussed moving the team to Oklahoma City, nor have I discussed it with ANY other member of our ownership group. I have been passionately com-

mitted to our process in Seattle, and have worked my (tail) off."

Yet on June 5, 2007, Sonics arena consultant Tim Romani e-mailed Bennett and asked that he talk to Oklahoma City manager Jim Couch before Romani was to "engage in earnest negotiations" with Couch.

Couch declined comment Thursday, citing the ongoing legal process and his pending deposition next week. A spokesman for Bennett, Dan Mahoney, also declined comment.

The e-mail messages also include Ward writing McClendon on Aug. 2, 2006, weeks after they purchased the Sonics and pledged they would attempt to keep them in Seattle.

"I don't think you and I really want to own a team there either ..." Ward wrote to McClendon, in the context of a partner bailing on the transaction.

When asked about the perception Bennett misled Stern last August that Sonics owners had never discussed moving the

team to Oklahoma City, league spokesman Tim Frank declined to comment.

Lakers 106, Clippers 78

At Los Angeles, Luke Walton scored 13 of his 18 points in the fourth quarter and the Lakers won their fifth in six games.

The victory moved the Lakers (54-25) within 1 1/2 games of the Western Conference-leading New Orleans Hornets entering Friday night's showdown between the teams. The Hornets play three of their last four games on the road while the Lakers finish with three at home.

Kobe Bryant scored 16 points for the Lakers, who blew the game open by outscoring the Clippers 32-11 to finish the third quarter and start the fourth for a 94-67 lead with 6 1/2 minutes left.

Nuggets 114, Warriors 105

At Oakland, California, Allen Iverson scored 33 points, J.R. Smith added 24 off the bench and Denver took control of the race for the West's final playoff spot.

The win moved Denver a full game ahead of Golden State in

Lakers' Bynum visits knee specialist

ELSEGUNDO, Calif. (AP)—Injured Lakers center Andrew Bynum saw a knee specialist in New York and still hasn't been cleared to practice, the team announced Thursday.

"This should not be seen as a setback in any way," said Dr. David Altcheck, who examined Bynum on Wednesday. "Andrew will continue his therapy program and workouts with the Lakers' training staff and will continue to be monitored until he can return to playing status."

Bynum has been out since Jan. 13, when he dislocated his left kneecap and bruised a bone landing on a teammate's foot while going for a rebound.

No target date has been given for Bynum's return, though

team to Oklahoma City, league spokesman Tim Frank declined to comment.

Seattle's motion filed Wednesday in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York seeks to enforce the city's subpoena of the financial records for the NBA and all of its teams. The city recently rejected Bennett's group offering \$26.5 million to settle the lease dispute and move the team after this season ends Sunday.

Seattle wants access to documents detailing how the league handles the relocation of teams, early termination of leases and what it wrote was "the NBA's direct involvement in the owners' attempts to move the Sonics."

When asked for the league's response to Seattle's subpoena that the NBA open its books, Frank said the league does not comment on pending litigation.

An assistant for Seattle city attorney Tom Carr said Carr was traveling Thursday and would not comment.

Harang holds off Brewer bats as Reds win



MILWAUKEE (AP)—

Aaron Harang held Milwaukee to one run in eight innings, leading the Cincinnati Reds to a 4-1 win over the Brewers in the National League on Thursday.

Edwin Encarnacion hit a two-run homer for Cincinnati and reliever Francisco Cordero earned a save against his former team.

Harang struck out three and walked none. Cordero, who left the Brewers to join the Reds in the offseason, pitched a perfect ninth for his second save of the season.

Cincinnati scored three runs in the top of the seventh after it had been tied 1-1.

Mets 4, Phillies 3, 12 innings

In New York, Jose Reyes scored the winning run with a deft slide at the plate in the 12th inning as New York downed Philadelphia.

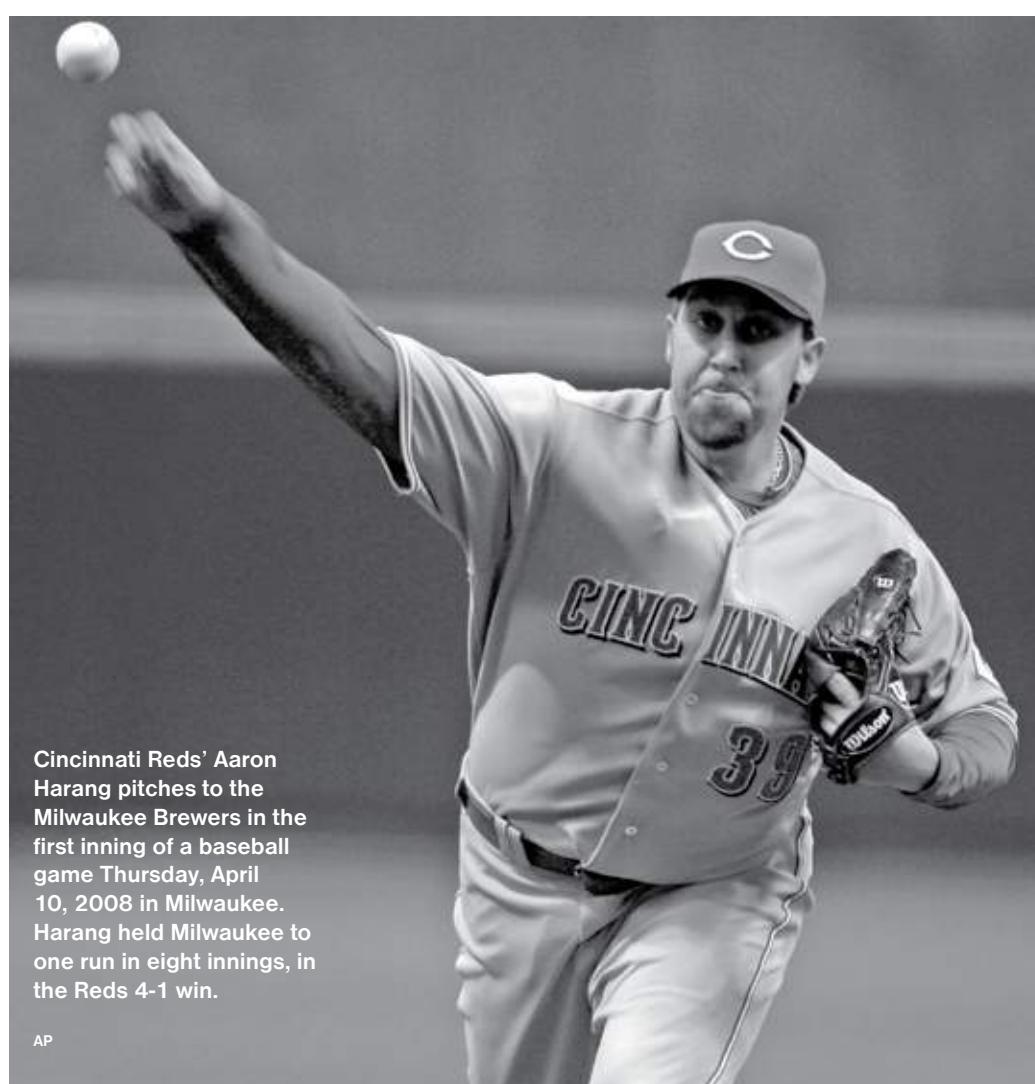
The Mets won successive games against the Phillies, having previously lost nine in a row to their National League East rivals.

With two outs in the 12th, Reyes doubled off Tom Gordon and Angel Pagan grounded a sharp single to center to clinch it.

Cubs 7, Pirates 3

In Pittsburgh, Geovany Soto and Mike Fontenot hit two-run homers in Chicago's five-run sixth inning as the Cubs finished off a three-game sweep of Pittsburgh.

Soto had three extra-base hits in his second career four-hit game as the Cubs won their sixth in a row over the Pirates dating to last season.



Cincinnati Reds' Aaron Harang pitches to the Milwaukee Brewers in the first inning of a baseball game Thursday, April 10, 2008 in Milwaukee. Harang held Milwaukee to one run in eight innings, in the Reds 4-1 win.

AP

Marlins 4, Nationals 3

In Washington, Mark Hendrickson pitched seven strong innings to steer Florida to a three-game sweep of Washington.

The defeat stretched the Nationals' losing streak to seven games.

Jorge Cantu produced three hits and two RBIs for the Marlins, while Hendrickson gave up only one run, while matching his

longest outing since June 2006.

The Marlins, who finished last in the NL East last season, have won five of six games to improve to 6-3 atop the division.

Giants 5, Cardinals 1

In San Francisco, Kevin Correia carried a shutout into the eighth inning in one of his best starts yet as San Francisco downed St. Louis.

The Giants won their third straight thanks to Correia who struck out four in 7 2-3 innings, and also singled with the bat.

San Francisco had gone 19 innings without allowing a run before finally conceding one in the ninth.

Rangers 5, Orioles 4

In Arlington, Texas, Ian Kinsler hit a tiebreaking RBI single in

the eighth inning and the Texas Rangers beat the Baltimore Orioles to complete a double-header sweep.

In the opener, Kevin Millwood (1-2) allowed one run in seven innings to lower his ERA to 1.29 and finally get a victory to show for his solid pitching this season.

Baltimore began the day with the AL's best record and a six-game winning streak, matching its longest of last season.

Athletics 3, Blue Jays 2

At Toronto, Travis Buck doubled home two runs in the 12th inning and Oakland completed a three-game sweep.

Buck went 3-for-6 with three RBIs, matching an Oakland record with three doubles. Buck started the season in an 0-for-22 but ended up going 7-for-16 with four RBIs and six doubles in the series, boosting his average to .189. The six doubles in a three-game series are an Oakland record.

The Athletics have won seven straight in Toronto dating to last season.

The winner was right-hander Joey Devine (1-0), who worked two innings after being recalled from Triple-A Sacramento earlier in the day when Rich Harden landed on the 15-day disabled list.

Yankees 6, Royals 1

At Kansas City, Missouri, Andy Pettitte picked up his first victory and Alex Rodriguez and Melky Cabrera each homered and drove in two runs, helping

New York avoid a series sweep.

Pettitte (1-1) held Kansas City to one run and five hits in 6 2-3 innings, and is 7-0 in his past nine starts against the Royals. Pettitte has a career record of 12-4 with a 3.06 ERA against Kansas City, which is his best earned run average against any AL club.

Red Sox 12, Tigers 6

At Boston, J.D. Drew went 3-for-3 with two runs and two RBIs, and Tim Wakefield fluttered his knuckleball for five innings to send Detroit to its eighth loss in nine games.

Manny Ramirez had a two-run double, and he also scored a run by ignoring a two-handed stop sign put up by third base coach DeMarlo Hale. Sean Casey drove in three runs on a pair of hits.

Wakefield (1-0) walked five and hit two batters, but allowed only three hits and one earned run. Nate Robertson (0-1) was the loser, allowing eight hits and two walks while striking out six in 5 1-3 innings.

Rays 7, Mariners 0

At St. Petersburg, Florida, Edwin Jackson allowed two hits in eight innings and Tampa Bay ended a four-game losing streak.

A 15-game loser in 2007, Jackson combined with Trever Miller on a three-hitter and improved to 2-0. Eric Hinske homered off Miguel Batista (0-2) and Mike DiFelice drove in three runs.

Tampa Bay pitched a shutout for the first time since a 1-0 win at Boston on Sept. 10. Seattle was blanked for the first time since a 6-0 loss at Anaheim on Aug. 27.

Bill Self reaches deal to stay at Kansas



LAWRENCE, Kan. (AP)—

Three days after winning the NCAA championship, Kansas coach Bill Self said no thanks to Oklahoma State, his alma mater, and agreed to a lucrative contract extension that could keep him at Kansas for the rest of his career.

"Home called," Self said. "And we love home. But this is home now."

The 45-year-old Self, an Oklahoma native who played for the Cowboys and was an assistant coach there at the beginning of his career, met with Oklahoma State athletic director Mike Holder Wednesday night for about two hours.

After conferring with Kansas athletic director Lew Perkins for several hours on Thursday, Self called Holder and told him of his decision.

"There was never serious interest on our part in leaving the University of Kansas," said Self, who has won 142 games, four Big 12 titles and a national championship in

five highly successful seasons with the Jayhawks.

"But there was serious interest in listening and helping Oklahoma State in a way that would put their basketball program in the position they want it to be in. We visited and slept on it and came to the conclusion that I felt all along that the time is right for my family to be in Lawrence, Kan., and lead this program, hopefully, to bigger and better things in the future."

Perkins, at a news conference with Self and chancellor Robert Hemenway, declined to give details of the deal. But it will include raises for assistant coaches and an extensive upgrading of the school's aging facilities.

There had been reports that Oklahoma State booster T. Boone Pickens, who has given the Cowboys \$165 million, was prepared to throw a megabuck offer at Self. But Self said no dollar figure was mentioned in his conversation with Holder.

"Bill is going to be compensated at the highest level," Perkins said. "Bill and I have agreed in principle that he will be our coach for many years to

come. The details and money and length and other things will be finalized over the next few weeks. We will give it to you as soon as we have it complete.

"The good news for us is Bill's staying and we're glad to have him."

Self has three years left on a contract that pays him \$1.375 million annually.

"I don't know what the big deal is, to be honest," Self said in the typically self-effacing manner that has endeared him to Kansas' rabid basketball fans.

"These last three weeks, four weeks, have been an absolute whirlwind. I don't know if a guy deserves to have as much fun as I've had."

Self's Jayhawks won a school-record 37 games and beat Memphis for the national title, coming back from a nine-point deficit in the final 2 minutes in dramatic fashion.

Self's new deal is likely to make him one of college basketball's highest-paid coaches. Florida coach Billy Donovan is believed to be the highest among coaches at public universities, after he signed a six-year con-

tract worth \$3.5 million per year in 2007. Texas' Rick Barnes is the highest-paid coach in the Big 12 at \$2 million a year.

But Self had made it clear all along that he wanted to upgrade the facilities to keep up with what he called "the arms race" in big-time collegiate athletics. The Jayhawks are completing a \$31 million project renovating and modernizing their football facilities.

"We need a practice facility, improved locker rooms, videos and cardio rooms," Self said. "We need a place to eat meals. We need a place for (the media) to do your job, a work room. We need extra locker rooms. We need the Hall of Fame to extend. That's just all part of it. We're working on housing."

Self said he now has no thoughts of ever leaving Kansas.

"The way I feel today and the way my family feels today, absolutely," he said. "I don't know how long my career's going to last. I don't see the finish line at all, but I see the finishing line being here."

He said the fact that Kansas will probably lose many key



Kansas coach Bill Self speaks during a news conference in Lawrence, Kan., Thursday, April 10, 2008.

players off this championship team to graduation and the NBA draft did not factor into his decision one way or another.

"There is going to be turnover. But I can promise you we're still going to be good," he said. "We don't even know who we're going to have yet. But we'll figure it out. We'll get some guys. We'll still be good. I think if I was going to leave, it would be a lot easier leaving having won Monday."

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES**NBA STANDINGS****EASTERN CONFERENCE**

	W	L	Pct	GB
z-Boston	62	16	.795	—
x-Philadelphia	40	38	.513	22
x-Toronto	39	39	.500	23
New Jersey	32	46	.410	30
New York	23	56	.291	39 1/2

Southeast Division

y-Orlando	49	29	.628	—
x-Washington	41	37	.526	8
Atlanta	36	42	.462	13
Charlotte	30	49	.380	19 1/2
Miami	14	64	.179	35

Central Division

y-Detroit	55	23	.705	—
x-Cleveland	43	35	.551	12
Indiana	34	44	.436	21
Chicago	30	48	.385	25
Milwaukee	26	52	.333	29

WESTERN CONFERENCE**Southwest Division**

x-New Orleans	55	23	.705	—
x-Houston	53	25	.679	2
x-San Antonio	53	25	.679	2
x-Dallas	50	29	.633	5 1/2
Memphis	21	57	.269	34

Northwest Division

y-Utah	52	27	.658	—
Denver	48	31	.608	4
Portland	39	39	.500	12 1/2
Minnesota	19	59	.244	32 1/2
Seattle	18	61	.228	34

Pacific Division

x-L.A. Lakers	54	25	.684	—
x-Phoenix	53	26	.671	1
Golden State	47	32	.595	7
Sacramento	36	42	.462	17 1/2
L.A. Clippers	23	56	.291	31

x-clinched playoff spot**y-clinched division****z-clinched conference****Yesterday's Games**

Denver 114, Golden State 105
Dallas 97, Utah 94
L.A. Lakers 106, L.A. Clippers 78

MLB STANDINGS**AMERICAN LEAGUE****East**

	W	L	Pct	GB
Baltimore	6	3	.667	1/2
Boston	5	5	.500	2
New York	5	5	.500	2
Tampa Bay	4	5	.444	2 1/2
Toronto	4	5	.444	2 1/2

Central Division

Kansas City	6	3	.667	—
Chicago	5	3	.625	1/2
Cleveland	4	5	.444	2
Minnesota	4	5	.444	2
Detroit	1	8	.111	5

West Division

Los Angeles	6	4	.600	—
Oakland	6	4	.600	—
Texas	5	4	.556	1 1/2
Seattle	4	6	.400	2

NATIONAL LEAGUE**East**

	W	L	Pct	GB
Florida	6	3	.667	—
New York	4	4	.500	1 1/2
Philadelphia	4	6	.400	2 1/2
Atlanta	3	6	.333	3
Washington	3	7	.300	3 1/2

Central Division

St. Louis	7	3	.700	—
Chicago	6	3	.667	1/2
Milwaukee	6	3	.667	1/2
Cincinnati	6	4	.600	1
Pittsburgh	3	6	.333	3 1/2
Houston	3	7	.300	4

West Division

Arizona	7	2	.778	—
San Diego	5	5	.500	2 1/2
Colorado	4	5	.444	3
Los Angeles	4	5	.444	3
San Francisco	4	6	.400	3 1/2

Yesterday's Games

Cincinnati 4, Milwaukee 1
Atlanta at Colorado, ppd., snow
Chicago Cubs 7, Pittsburgh 3
Florida 4, Washington 3
N.Y. Mets 4, Philadelphia 3, 12 innings
San Francisco 5, St. Louis 1

By The Associated Press

Yap, Pingris lead All-Star teams starters

Bacolod City gets ready for All-Star festivities



**MANILA,
Philippines**

Purefoods superstar James Yap underscored his soaring popularity in the just concluded balloting for starters of the North and South teams of this year's PBA All-Star Game.

The former MVP from Escalante, Negros Occidental received 50,763 votes—highest among candidates from both teams—and earned his fifth start in the league's annual spectacle.

Interestingly, Yap—an All-Star starter in each of the last four years dating back to his rookie year in 2004—was the only player voted by fans, either through actual voting at

the game venue, in the host city of Bacolod or the league's official website, www.pba.ph, to breach the 50,000 mark.

Two other consistent starters—Coca-Cola big man Asi Taulava (36,312) and Talk N Text playmaker Jimmy Alapag (22,752)—join Yap in the South team that also includes Sta. Lucia's Kelly Williams (38,832) and Magnolia's Danny Seigle (38,448) in the front-court rotation.

Do-it-all Magnolia forward Mark Pingris was the top vote getter among the North All-Stars with 35,578 votes.

With him in the team are Purefoods' Kerby Raymundo (32,274), Magnolia hotshot

Lordy Tugade (19,374) and the Barangay Ginebra backcourt duo of Mark Caguioa (29,775) and Jayjay Helterbrand (26,244).

A starter in the All-Star Game for the first time in his eight-year career, Tugade earned the spot by taking over the slot of Purefoods' Romel Adducul (21,903). The former

San Sebastian King Stag is out of commission after being diagnosed with the Big C.

Tugade finished fourth behind Adducul in the balloting.

The remaining slots in both teams will be filled by the votes



Yap

of all 10 PBA coaches prior to the All-Star Weekend in Bacolod City from April 24-



Mavs top Jazz to clinch playoff spot
Dirk Nowitzki swished a 3-pointer with 0.9 seconds left, breaking a tie and giving the Dallas Mavericks a 97-94 victory over the Utah Jazz on Thursday night that also clinched a playoff berth. **25**

Saipan Tribune Sports

Harang holds off Brewer bats as Reds win

Aaron Harang held Milwaukee to one run in eight innings, leading the Cincinnati Reds to a 4-1 win over the Brewers in the National League on Thursday. **26**



28 SATURDAY, APRIL 12, 2008

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Ryan runs away with MVP plum

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Fiesta-Grand hotshot Ryan Sanciangco was named the 2nd Annual HANMI Cup Inter-Hotel Basketball League most valuable player after getting the nod from coordinator Lito Espino.

Espino, who is president of HANMI Cup organizer, Northern Marianas Bartenders Association, said he picked Sanciangco not only because the 5'8" guard-forward excelled in the statistics side of the MVP race but also after leading Fiesta-Grand to the pennant championship and to the finals—attested by the Shirley's Coffee Shop employee's five game MVP awards.

Incidentally, Sanciangco and company will try to complete a fairytale ending to its one-loss season when it collides with Pacific Islands Club in the do-or-die championship set for tomorrow at 4:30pm, following the battle for third between last year's finalists Hyatt Regency Saipan and Aqua Resort Club.

Sanciangco actually finished fourth in the MVP points race with a rating of 67.5 percent. Teammate Elmer Esdrelon was tops with a 86.7 rating followed by Darwin Barbo of Aqua Resort (73.2 percent), and Dennis Vinas of Saipan World Resort (71.7 percent).

Hafadai Beach Hotel's Peter Iguel (63.9 percent), Hyatt Regency's Bernard Aquino (62.8 percent), World Resort's Jerryel Mangahis (54.6 percent),

percent), Hyatt Regency's Edmark Mendoza (53.5 percent), Hafadai's Michael Olaitaman (48.5 percent), and Pacific Islands Club's Derrick Tudela (45.7 percent) complete the Top 10 in the MVP points race.

The MVP points race, compiled by league head statistician

Andrew Mesina, was based on the points, 3-points made, free throw percentage, rebounds, assists, steals, blocked shots, and team standnings of players.

Esdrelon, Barbo, Vinas, and Iguel also joined Sanciangco in the 2008

Fiesta-Grand guard-forward Ryan Sanciangco, seen here in a file photo, won the regular season MVP award of the 2nd Annual HANMI Cup Inter-Hotel Basketball League.

OSCAR YEMA

HANMI Cup Mythical Five.

Sanciangco actually was the top scorer of the 2008 edition of the HANMI Cup, averaging 28.4 points per game. Barbo finished second with a 28 points per game clip followed by Iguel (26 ppg.), Esdrelon (24.3 ppg.), and Vinas (20 ppg.).

Esdrelon was the league's most accurate free throw shooter, sinking 76 percent of free throws awarded him. Vinas was second with a 73.6-percent clip. Aquino was third (72.4 percent), Olaitaman fourth (64.2 percent), and Barbo rounded out the Top 5 (62.6 percent).

Esdrelon also was the top marksman from the 3-point territory with 41 hits from beyond the arc. Pacific Islands Club's James Abuy was a far second with 26 makes from rainbow land with Iguel (18), Sanciangco (13), and Aquarius Beach Tower's George Barbo (11) completing the Top 5 in the category.

Tudela was a monster on the backboard with a 9.2 caroms per game average to lead the rebounding department. Darwin Barbo finished a close second with 9.1 boards per game, followed in the Top 5 by Mendoza (7.8 rpg.), Iguel (7.4 rpg.), and Esdrelon (7 rpg.).

The Best in Assists plum also went to Esdrelon after the

See RYAN on Page 27



SAIPAN, USA

HANMI

HOTEL ASSOCIATION NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS



WWW.OCEANIATENNIS.COM

Pacific Oceania team captain Cyrille Mainguy, Michael Leong, Juan Sebastian Langton, Brett Baudinet, and Cyril Jacob pose with their drivers in Muscat the night before their 2008 Davis Cup Asia/Oceania Zone Group II relegation tie against Oman.

Leong, Langton to see action in opening singles

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

Michael Leong of Solomon Islands

and Juan Sebastian

Langton of Samoa

opened Pacific

Oceania's 2008 Da-

vis Cup Asia/Oce-

ania Zone Group II

relegation tie against Oman held late

yesterday, Saipan time, at the Sultan

Qaboos Sports Complex in Muscat.

Pacific Oceania team captain Cy-



rille Mainguy also named a new combination made up of Brett Baudinet of Cook Islands and Cyril Jacob of Vanuatu for the doubles match set for today.

The draw was made by June Baudinet, former president of Tennis Cook Islands, who arrived in Muscat yesterday morning to support the Islanders.

According to the Oceania Tennis

See LEONG on Page 27

RGA April Ace tomorrow

The Refuluwasch Golf Association April Ace of the Month Tournament will be held tomorrow, April 13, at the Laolao Bay Golf Resort east course.

Check in time for the club's fourth monthly tournament of the year is 12pm with tee off set 30 minutes later as 12:30pm.

Score to beat in this month's competition is the 65 net fired by John Mettao during RGA's April qualifier held last March 30 on the same venue.

Slots are open for the first 16

See RGA on Page 27



MARK RABAGO

Saipan Swim Club head coach Michael Stewart pulls a catamaran with a little help from his swimmers during last year's Escape from Managaha Island. Stewart and six other swimmers will have a tougher challenge this weekend during the Inaugural Coach Mike's Insane 20K Ocean Swim from Marianas Resort beach in Marpi to the Pacific Islands Club beach in San Antonio.

'Magnificent Seven' to brave tomorrow's 20K ocean swim

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Seven brave swimmers will take on the challenge of the Inaugural Coach Mike's Insane 20K Ocean Swim set for tomorrow from Marianas Resort beach in Marpi to the Pacific Islands Club beach in San Antonio.

Saipan Swim Club head coach Mike Stewart will lead the seven brave swimmers. Joining Stewart are

See MAGNIFICENT on Page 27